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Kashmir

Glimpses of History, Culture and Literary Traditions

By
Prof. Mohi-ud-Din Hajini

Edited/Translated by
Ameen Fayaz

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About the book

This book is a collection of papers written by late Prof.Mohi ud Din Hajini on different aspects of Kashmiri literature, culture and history. Of the six papers presented in the collection ,the first three had been written by the late Professor in English himself and the last three in Kashmiri (translated by the compiler, Ameen Fayaz, into English).The papers published in this book would be helpful for research scholars, teachers and students of Kashmiri literary heritage and its genesis/evolution. The book could prove a small reservoir of intellectual reflections on our glorious past and would also be an inspiration for those who are contributing to our culture and literary thought.

Professor Mohi ud Din Hajini (1917-1993) was a great academic, researcher of Kashmiri language and literature. An organizer and institution maker par-excellence, he worked tirelessly for an intellectual movement in Kashmiri language and literature. The present compilation of some of his writings is directed towards introducing the late Professor to English reading section of scholars working on Kashmiri language, literature and culture.

About Editor / Translator

Ameen Fayaz teaches English language and literature at the Department of English, North Campus, University of Kashmir. He has edited Discourses of Prof. Hajini, a collection of his English papers on different themes. In the present compilation, he has translated three of late Hajini's papers from Kashmiri to English.

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Foreword

Professor Mohi-ud-Din Hajini was one of those legendary academics/ literary and social activists of Kashmir whose contributions, both documented and undocumented, will be always remembered by Kashmiris for their profundity of thought and sincerity of approach. Hajini has been literally a true manifestation of this couplet of Allama Iqbal: "*Hazarun sal nargis apni benuri pe roti hai / badi mushkil say hota chaman main deedawar paida*". Through his literary, social and religious activism, Hajini ignited the minds and souls of hundreds and thousands of Kashmiris during his services as Professor of Arabic and still continues to do so through his writings and memories of deep significance he left behind. Born at *Parra Mohalla* Hajin to Haji Gh Nabi Parray in 1917, Mohi-ud-Din rose like a star and dominated the literary, cultural and religious stage of Kashmir till his death in 1993.Hajini is a name known/remembered and celebrated across the length and breadth of Kashmir. He has, in fact, become a legend unto himself, particularly among those people who know the value of scholarship and what does it mean to be an intel-

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lectual. Prior to introducing the present collection of papers written by late Hajini, three in English by himself and the other three translated from Kashmiri by this author, it would be in place to introduce Mr Hajini through his contributions/writings in Kashmiri, Urdu and English as a part of his role as the Sir Syed of Kashmir vis-a vis the renaissance in Kashmiri language and literature and institution building by laying the foundation of different literary and cultural organizations.

After more than twenty five years of his death, when one looks back at his written and other contributions, one concludes that Hajini was not satisfied with the then circumstances of Kashmir and wanted a great change at the intellectual level and so developed an intellectual response for overcoming the crises in Kashmir. That is why he believed in the development of institutions, one after another, meeting people across Kashmir, provoking people to think and act and thus aimed at some intellectual revolution that he thought would change the face of Kashmir. For the sake of making this argument about Hajini a bit clearer and to place it into certain perspective, I would first of all introduce him to our present day readers and writers through a brief review of his Kashmiri, Urdu and English writings ,and then move on to talk about his contributions through literary, cultural and religious activism.

Mohi-ud-Din Hajini did his graduation from the SP College, Srinagar. It was during his undergraduate days (1939) when he started publishing his play *Grees sund Ghar* (*Peasant's House*) in the *Gulrez* magazine. The play was formally published in the book form in 1952. Late Hajini wrote just one play. But, this play in itself gives the reader an opportunity to understand the intellectual depth of Mohi-ud-Din Hajini as the play is rooted in the environment and circumstances of Kashmir of those days. The three act play could be counted as a resistance piece of writing as it shows not only the helplessness of

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Kashmiri peasants and farmers but also the highhandedness and oppressive measures and techniques that the landlords and autocratic *Dogra* rulers of Kashmir used against Kashmiri Muslims. Hajini as a young College-going man did not shirk his responsibility and came up with a wonderful artistic and literary response to the *Dogra* oppression in Kashmir.

Before the partition of India, Hajini had returned from the Aligarh Muslim University with Master's Degree in Arabic, Diploma in Journalism and Diploma in Law; subsequently, Hajini was appointed as Lecturer of Arabic in the Higher Education Department of Kashmir. His first place of posting was the Prince of Wales College Jammu where he served till the infamous massacre of Jammu Muslims in 1947; subsequently, he got himself transferred to the S.P. College, Srinagar where he continued to teach, write and do his activism till his retirement. Hajini was quite alive and aware of the socio-political changes that South Asian region was undergoing, and he was particularly keenly observing the direction in which things were moving in Kashmir, both before 1947 and after it. With his profound understanding of how a colonized people lose their identity, culture and intellectual heritage, Hajini perhaps realized that the inferiority complex and dependency complex of Kashmiri people, inflicted on their collective psyche through a long history of foreign rule, at the hands of Mughals, Afghans, Sikhs and Dogras, cannot be done away with until and unless Kashmiris come to know who they are; and this would be possible only when they know their language, literary and cultural heritage and the history as a whole. His was a complete and perfect project of decolonizing the Kashmiri mind and he wanted to achieve the targets of this goal through an institutional method and approach. As a literary and cultural activist, he mobilized the government for introducing Kashmiri as an optional subject in schools, higher secondaries and colleges of Kashmir so that Kashmiri students

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know their literary and cultural heritage. He, in fact, prepared *Kashur Reader* on the instructions of Directorate of School Education so that teachers and students would have a compact material in their hands for studying Kashmiri language. This combination of activism and scholarship again provides us with a glimpse of his mind: that he wanted Kashmiris to feel pride in doing academics through their mother tongue so that all the impressions of intellectual slavery could be removed and also this idea could be planted in the minds of Kashmiri intelligentsia that a better intellectual work could be produced if mother tongue is used as a medium of instruction for teaching/learning in our schools and colleges. This has been the motive of many movements that aimed at decolonization of education in their countries in the 1950s and 1960s.

In order to develop a sound intellectual Kashmiri movement, Hajini also realized that Kashmiri scribes, writers and thinkers need to be catapulted towards the goal of national awakening and cultural renaissance through knowledge production about those poets, philosophers and writers of Kashmir whose works lie buried under dust. In his own neighborhood, when he started his research projects on Kashmiri literature he realized that Wahab Parray has been one of those greatest poets/bards of Kashmir whose writings could have been the subject of interest at the international level as Wahab was not only a great translator but also a great poet. Starting his research on Kashmiri literary heritage, he published a monograph on Wahab Parray in 1959 at the Art and Cultural Academy of Kashmir in order to boost the morale of other writers and researchers of Kashmir for studies on other Kashmiri writers. In 1960, he went on to produce a book titled *Kashir Shairi* for the *Sahatya Akademy* of India ,thereby introducing samples of Kashmiri poetry at a bigger platform and also providing his prototypes of research work for the encouragement of Kashmiri readers and writers. In 1961, he published a book by the

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title of *Kashiri Nasrach Kitab*. Through these small but very significant contributions of Hajini, one now realizes why he must have been almost obsessed with the thought of producing one sample of research in Kashmir after the other. I am sure his was a method of throwing hints to Kashmiri people so that they could be awakened from their long slumber for a big intellectual and Cultural Revolution in Kashmir.

My idea of Hajini as a revolutionary torch bearer of Kashmiri culture is confirmed when I see him writing a Kashmiri translation of famous Urdu poem, *Musadas Hali*, which when published by Hali sent shock waves across Indian Muslim reader as it hit the nail in its heads while talking about the lost glory of Muslims across the world and what they should have been. Hajini translated the poem in Kashmiri, which was well received and appreciated by critics. But, he did not write any other translation of poetry later on. Perhaps, once again, he just wanted to provide an impetus to the Kashmiri writers that great literary works across the world could be translated into Kashmiri for maximizing knowledge production and critical thought available in Kashmiri. In *Dastan* and stories, he translated *Arabian Nights* into Kashmiri thereby providing a sample of translation in *Dastan* writing from other languages like Arabic. He could have chosen to write, publish and research on just one subject, thereby producing great scholarship in the same; but his mission was to ignite the frozen minds of Kashmiris, bring them out of slumber and experiment with different things so that the project of total rise could be someday achieved with more power and depth. He continued to produce research work on Kashmiri literature tirelessly as is testified to by other magnum opus works like: collection of two volume poetry of Wahab Parray by the title of *Deewan e Wahab*, *Kalam e Asad Parray*, *Kulyat e Siddiq Ullah Hajini*; *Kalam e Lasi Mansu*; *Lok Ras; Gaman Manz Pheri Pheri*, and, *Maqalat*, which won him prestigious Sahitya

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Akademy Award in 1970. The researcher in Hajini did not rest till he edited and published the Kashmiri translation of Persian epic *Shahnama* by Wahab Parray in 1973. All these works demanded a serious pursuit, research aptitude and a lot of homework which Professor Hajini did despite his academic and activist engagements. He discovered the creative works of Kashmiri poets, collected their handwritten manuscripts, compared their scripts, edited them, compiled them in a proper order, wrote detailed forewords to them and got them published through different reputed publication houses, most of the times by spending his own money on the same. It won't be an exaggeration to say that Kashmiri language possessed him and it remained so till he breathed his last in 1993.

Hajini had Master's degree in Arabic but his areas of interest also included Kashmiri as shown above, Urdu literature, Persian Literature, English literature and Science and Philosophy. In fact, he thought globally and acted locally. Kashmiri language owes its modernization to the efforts of Professor Hajini which was guided by his understanding of world literature, global literary movements of his time and his scientific method of thinking and critical bent of mind. He, as an active teacher and researcher at the SP College, Srinagar, played an instrumental role in the publication of the *Pratap* magazine and organization of monthly seminars on different topics. Some of the papers that he published during his academic career at the S.P. College may provide the reader an idea of the mind that worked while writing those papers .These papers include: "The Concept of Unity", "Fundamentals of Science and Quran", "Religion in World Thought", "In Defence of Irrationalism", "Mediaval Legacy to Modern Science" and many others. These papers were published by the *Halqa e Adab* Sonawari with Ameen Fayaz as compiler/editor in 2013 in the form of a book titled *Discourses of Professor Mohi-ud-Din Hajini.* Three papers from the same book are re-published in this

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book as they are relevant to the proposed title of the book. The intellectual depth, standard of English language in these papers and pursuit of the subject compel one to think that Hajini had a global outlook and he attempted its local application through his tireless efforts towards a literary and cultural renaissance in Kashmiri language and literature.

His scientific and philosophical aptitude are reflected through some of his essays that he wrote in Kashmiri: "alam e Akbar" and "Pani Panas Kun". By engaging himself in a philosophical conversation with himself about self, universe, God, celestial spheres and different forms of life, Professor Hajini attempts at self-discovery and self repairment in these essays. Urdu literature must be thankful to Professor Hajini for his efforts of translating the *Kitab but Tawaseen* of famous Sufi saint, Mansur Hallaj, into lucid Urdu with explanations of his sayings. Apart from the above-mentioned small and big research, translation and creative works, Hajini has many other works like *Kashkol* to his credit and scores of forewords in Kashmiri which if collected will be three to four volumes in size. The present work, English translation of three such Kashmiri papers of Hajini (translated by this writer) for working out a book on titled *Kashmir: Glimes of History, Culture and Literary Heritages* is a tribute to Professor Mohi-ud-Din Hajini. Hajini has apparently authored/compiled/edited sixteen books; but the biggest task left behind him is the number of research papers/forewords in different journals and magazines and to different books, which if collected would make another ten to fifteen books.

With these glimpses of research and academic endeavors that Hajini put into action for a prolific intellectual Kashmiri movement from 1947 onwards, it would be now in place to make a mention of his organizational/institutional contributions so that thought translated into action by Hajini could also be put into a certain perspective. Apart from his active academic/research/teaching /writing activ-

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ities, Hajini connected himself with the sensitive masses and thoughtful class of Kashmiri society through different literary and cultural platforms. Some institutions and organizations that he found and built through his coordination with likeminded people across the valley are: the *Halqa e Adab Sonawari*, the *Adbee Markaz Kamraz* and the *Bazm e Adab*. He contributed actively on all these platforms for research activities, development of Kashmiri language and literature and cultural awakening among Kashmiri people. At the *Halqa e Adab*, Professor Hajini would gather teachers, activists and poets from Sonawari, organize debates and discussions on different subjects, publish poetry and research papers on different subjects in its journal, *Wularak e Malar*, and organize literary events. Late Mohammad Ahsan Ahsan, Dr Azizz Hajini, Abdul Ahad Hajini, Sona Ullah Niyaz, Late Ab Karim Khasta, Gh Hasan Taskeen, Mr Inayat Ullah Parray, Abdul Khaliq Haneef and many other literary figures from Hajin owe their growth and evolution as prominent literary figures and religious activists to this tree planted by Prof. Hajini. The standard of *Wularaki Malar* in the times of late Professor speaks volumes about the seriousness with which he cultivated and constructed intellect at this platform. Similarly, Prof. Hajini mobilized his friends like Prof. Rashid Nazki, Prof. Mashal Sultanpori, late Mohammad Ahsan Ahsan and others and founded one of the largest literary organizations of Kashmir, the *Adbee Markaz Kamraz* in 1972. This organization has been at the forefront in raising awareness among the masses about Kashmiri language and literature, sensitizing bureaucracy and other state machinery about the plight of Kashmiri language and for its development through its seminars, publications and manifestoes. The *Adbee Markaz Kamraz* has been publishing its organ the *Prave* with the sole motive of providing a literary platform to writers/thinkers and scribes. The seed sown by Hajini and his friends has now grown into a big oak tree. Other than these literary and cultural ac-

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tivities, Professor Hajini was more of a religious scholar also. At Hajin, he was part of all religious activities. He mobilized the people of Hajin in 1960s for the construction of a big *Jamia Masjid* which would be aesthetically a monumental piece of architecture and spiritually/intellectually a confluence of tradition and modernity. His lectures /sermons at this *Jamia Masjid* could not be recorded by his associates, which otherwise could have been a very important testimony of his understanding of religious thought and tradition. Other than these institutions and organizations, he was member of many important state level and international organizations like *Rabita e Alam e Islami, Kashmiri Rasm Khat Committee, Sahitya Akademy Delhi, Muslim Education Trust Sopore, Editorial Board Kashmiri Dictionary Project, Cultural Academy of Kashmir, Faculty of Oriental Learning, Jammu Kashmir University, Advisory Board, BOSE Kashmir, Unjaman Nusrat ul Islam, Srinagar ,Kashmir Cultural Organization, Srinagar, Central Committee, Cultural Academy, Kashmiri Bazm e Adab* and many others. Such a vast association of Hajini with cultural, literary and religious organizations speaks volumes about his thought and practice and his commitment to literary and intellectual renaissance in Kashmir which forces one to think of calling him the Sir Syed of Kashmiri language and literature. His political thought regarding Kashmir may require a serious and well researched engagement and may, in fact, demand a separate volume as he was not at all disconnected with the politics of his times.

The present book by Professor Hajini that this author has compiled comprises six papers written by late Hajini on different subjects from Kashmiri literature. The first three: "An Outline of the Growth of Various Forms in Kashmiri Literature", "Outlines of the Culture of Kashmir" and "Historical Background of Kashmiri Language" were written by the Professor in English himself and published in different issues of the *Pratap* and journal of the SP College Srinagar in 1950s

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and 1960s. The other three: "The Historians of Kamraz", "Asad Parray: His Poetry and Metaphysical Thought" and "Shahnama Firdousi and its Kashmiri Translation by Wahab Parray Hajini: A Comparative Study" were originally written by late Hajini in Kashmiri language and published either in journals like the *Wularaki Malar* or as forewords to books like *Shahnama* and *Kulyati Asad*. The present author translated these three papers into English and put them with the other three on the same subject so that a book length work on the subject could be developed for teachers, scholars and general readers of Kashmiri language and literature.

It is hoped that the collection of papers would be helpful for teachers, scholars and researchers of Kashmiri language and literature. It is also hoped that serious and sincere critics of Kashmiri language and literature would come up with their feedback so that shortcomings found in this compilation and my translation of the three Kashmiri papers of late Hajini's could be overcome and not repeated in any future compilation of Hajini's works in English. In the end, I am thankful to the Jay Kay Books for accepting the proposal for publication of this book and to the President of the *Halqa e Adab* Sonawari, Ab Ahad Hajini, for granting me the permission for the publication of the available material.

Ameen Fayaz
Hajin Sonawari

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An Outline of the Growth of Various Forms in Kashmiri Literature

A. Epics

The classical *Mahabharata* was probably rendered into Kashmiri during Sultan Zain-ul-Aabideen's time; the mutilated manuscript in the Research Department is perhaps its only extant copy. Its translator is nowhere traceable in the text, and its diction is mostly outdated. Bhatavtar's reported translation of some parts or the whole of Firdousi's *Shahnama* during this period has never been located anywhere. After the downfall of the Shahmiri and Chak dynasties, literary interest in epics continued declining till Prakash Kaul of Kurigam retold the *Ramayana* in Kashmiri probably in A.D. 1847. There were other abridged versions of the *Ramayana*, the latest one being Nila Kanth Sharma's in the present century. From amongst the 19th Century epic poets, Moulvi Siddiquallah of Hajin gave us the first version of Nizam's famous *Sikendernama*; Himidullah of Anantnag is the only Kashmiri poet in the 19th century who wrote his *Akbarnama* (Afghan wars with the British) in Persian, and Wahab Parey of Hajin, the greatest epic poet in Kashmiri, rendered it

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into Kashmiri when he was a budding poet. Later, Wahhab retold Firdousi's entire *Shahnama* in 23491 verses, including *Khilaftnama* (i.e, the Muslim conquest of Iran) in 6666 verses. It was on Wahhab's initiative that Amir Shah of Kreri brought forth the voluminous Kashmiri version of Khajoo's *Saamnama*. Lachman Koul Bulbul's abbreviated *Saamnama* (A.D. 1898) is purer in diction than, though not superior in content to, Amir Shah's Amir Shah's other noteworthy epic is *Khawarnama* on the military exploits of the fourth Orthodox Caliph, Hazrate-e-Ali. He was followed by Muzaffar Shah, who wrote *Jang-e-Mukhtar*, depicting the horrible vengeance wrought on Ummayed troops, who were reported to him to have killed Imam-e-Hussain, the martyr. All these classical renderings from Persian stand as milestones in our epic literature, providing a pattern for a host of junior poets in epics; hence we see, for instance, Ali Shah of Haril (d.1932) writing dozens of Razmia (combat) works, mostly covering early Muslim History, till Gh. Mohamad Hanfi (d. 1937) retold the *Qissa-e-Amir Hamza* of Allama Faizi in Persianized Kashmiri. By this time, almost all Arab battles fought and won during the time of the Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) and his rightly guided Caliphs, were rendered into Kashmiri verse, mostly dominated by Persian not only in style and metre, but in phrases, epithets, conceit and hyporebole. It is not a strange experience in the 19th century and the early 20th century that sometimes small combat-epics are woven round a casual reference in Muslim History and tactfully developed to a glorious climax. With the advancement in education, poets seem to have completely disengaged themselves from epic literature; that is why no epic in the Mathnavi form has appeared since 1937.

B. Romantic Bazmia

Even though romanticism is a trend rather than a form in itself, it bestrides, like a Colossus, both epic and Razmia poetry. With rare

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exceptions, where the poet follows the text strictly in accordance with the Muslim History (like the *Maghazi Nabi* of Siddiq-ullah), the majority of epics are romantic in the sense that each one "embodies the life and adventure of some hero of Chivalry, or belongs, in matter and form, to the age of knighthood". Similarly, each one has a tinge of fictitious narrative of which the scenes and incidents are very remote from ordinary life, and often "woven into wanton exaggeration and picturesque falsehood," the recognized ingredients of romance both in epics and in aesthetic poetry.

The influence of Persian often creeps intensely in subjective moods that sublimate into romantic flashes first under a veiled and allegorical sensuousness and later into sublime ejaculations. Habba Khatoon, Arnimal, Rasool Mir and Mahjoor respectively stand as milestones in the romantic songs of the 16th, 18th, 19th and 20th centuries. To them everything in the romantic environment of Kashmir, "particularly flower, meadow, glen, glade and even a thistle appeared both bewildering and soothing" and above all "in rapturous communication with the poet's sub-conscious". (Kaul). This tradition was carried further by Wahhab in Ghazals and by Haqqani, Haji Miskeen, Hairat and Lassa Khan in their Bazmia (love) Mathnavi; but the field of the first three was vast enough to be limited to pure Mathnavi. In fact, the prolific legacy of Mathnavi literature during the 19th and the early 20th century is potential enough to supply sublime models of style and theme for a long time to come. *Gulrez*, *Gulnoor*, *Nal-o-Daman*, *Rana-Zeba*, *Sherin-Khusroo*, *Wamiq-Azra*, *Gul-e-Bakawali*, *Mumtaz-e-Benazir*, only Kashmiri versions of foreign romantic works, do come up to standard as regards diction, plot, and pitch in the style.

C. Vaakh and Shrukh

The earliest forms of our poetry are Lal Ded's Vaakh (from Sanskrit "Vakya", word) and Shiekh Noor-ud-Din Noorani's Shrukh

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(from Sanskrit "Shlok"). A Vaakh is mostly "a four-line stanza, complete and independent in itself, a sententious, gnomic verse, mystical and didactic..... rhyming abab, abcb or abac, or sometimes even rhymeless". (Kaul). The Shrukh also follows the same rhyme-scheme with a difference in scope and diction, and sometimes in metre too. It can go beyond one stanza, naturalize Persian and Arabic mystical vocables. As for the thought content of the two, Lal Ded appears to be a Shaivite Yogni, and Nund Reshi the founder of a Muslim Sufi order. It is quite inferable that both these forms must have been used by poets for a pretty long time before Lal Ded; but we have irretrievably lost this stock; nor do we possess too viable a legacy in Vaakh and Shrukh forms except some well-composed stanzas in the poetry of Rup Bhawani (d.1721 A.D.) and some anonymous pieces of Shrukh recorded in a number of Reshinamas and Noornamas.

D. Watsun and Ghazal

Watsun is a 3-line stanza followed by a refrain (Voje) used for songs long before Habba Khatoon (d. 1606), but we lost every trace of it during Mughal and Afghan rule in Kashmir. Habba Khatoon popularized this form and bequeathed it to posterity for use in almost all types of songs. "Most of these songs were included in the repertoire of the musician or the folk-minstrel" (Kaul); and each song contains at least five stazas. Under the influence of Persian Literature, from the 16th century onwards, most of the educated Kashmiris started writing ghazal epics, 'mathnavis', 'tadhkiras', etc. in Persian and exclusively on the Iranian pattern; whereas the unlettered Kashmiri poet stuck to the Watsun form. In effect, there was no poet in Kashmiri upto the beginning of Sikh rule whom we can catalogue as a ghazal-writer, while there is no period in our literary history during the last 400 years when Watsun in various metres and rhyme-schemes was not in vogue, though, we must admit, a major portion of Watsun-

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songs was either lost in verbal transmission or interpolated by professional bards. Ghazal actually started creeping into Kashmiri literature through the numerous translations and adaptations of non-Kashmiri Mathnavis in the 19th century. Today we see the aesthetic ghazal and the Watsun-song covering the maximum poetic output of the last 100 years.

It will require a full discourse to summarize the innumerable facets that the two forms have assumed since Mahmood Gami (d, 1855) "who bestrode the times he lived in and indeed the whole century, like a Colossus" (Kaul) and Master Zinda Kaul (d. 1965) whose poetry "reflects the man and his contemplative cast of mind" (Kaul) – but both masters of Watsun in their own right. By a strange but historic coincidence in time, Mahjoor and Azad appeared on the scene at the most opportune time to resuscitate the Watsun – song and ghazal, when "the use of anaemic and worn-out conceit, imagery and the insincere hyperbole of the decadent Persian poetry" (Kaul) had rendered both these forms not only hackneyed in diction and insipid in taste, but also out-dated in appeal. Azad's versatile genius in both the forms opened up new vistas in modern poetry before 1947, followed by Fazil, Arif, Nawaz, Nadim, Rasa Javidani, Rahi, Kamil, Khayal and Azim, who, as harbingers of modern trends in literature since 1947 A.D., enriched Kashmiri poetry with the finest pieces in ghazal and song. It was, in effect, due mainly to their conscientious endeavours that even the aged traditionalists like Tanha, Wali, Saair, Premi and Almast had to 'remodel' their muse on modern, if not on progressive, lines. Both these elderly groups struck a rationale followed by a host of contemporary poets who have widened the scope of and elevated the ghazal and song to matured and more exuberant level. To name only a few at random, Nazir, Santosh, Rasheed Nazki, Ranjoor, Majboor, G.N. Gauhar, A.R. Azad, Manzoor Hashmi, Marghoob Banihali, and Mishal from the elderly group, and Saqi, Rafique

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Raaz, Masarrat, Shahbaaz, Gamgeen, Ahsan, Aajid, Sajood, Nishat, Fida, etc, from the younger group, have by now been recognized not only as promising ghazal wirters, but also as a bold team experimenting in various other forms rarely touched before 1947. Mainly because of "financial stringency" the major portion of their work has hitherto not been published except for a few selected collections here and there, or some ghazals and songs in scattered journals, or, in some cases, only a few poems recited and recorded in Mushairas.

E. Lyrics

The lyric originally meant something pertaining to the lyre, i.e, to be sung; later it came to mean a poem divided into stanzas or strophes, and directly expressing the poet's thoughts or sentiments. In Kashmiri we have Lol-lyrics, a phrase coined by Prof. J.L. Kaul, Lol implying "an untranslatable complex of love, longing and tugging at the heart". (Kaul). "This form has a long history and tradition in Kashmir. It is rarely more than six to ten lines, including the refrain, and often converges on a single mood". (Kaul). Habba Khatoon initiated its form 'Watsun' in which each three-line stanza is followed by a refrain (Voje). In due course, all songs such as Chhakri, Rov and Lila adopted 'Watsun' as its form. We again owe its preservation to the professional singers of the Sufiana Kalam (mystic poetry) and to professional bards in the countryside.

According J.L. Kaul, "it is a thing of music, with its end-rhymes, medial rhymes and ever-recurring refrains, its alliterations, and assonance that come naturally as the very stuff of the language which has high proportion of vowels and semi vowels to its consonants and in which aspirates, gutturals and consonants are rare. Its appeal is directly to the emotions of the listener".

In classical lyrics, such as those of Habba Khatoon and Arnimal, there were few allusions and fewer ornaments; they had directness,

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simplicity, and a tender poignancy of feeling; whereas the later imitations are "charged with the intensity of feeling that often concentrates on the yearning for the beloved" that may resemble any human being from Yusuf Shah Chak (the exiled and dethroned lover of Habba Khatoon) to the Biblical Yusuf (Joseph), the ideal of beauty in all oriental lore. As for the latter period, i.e, from Mahmood Gami onwards, our lyrics clearly fall into two groups; Rasool Mir, Maqbool Shah, Krishna Razdan (1925) and Mahjoor sing of Mohammadan type of beloved; Nema Sahib (1880), Swachh Kral and Aziz Darvish (d.1890) wrote lyrics to soothe the drooping soul of the complex – ridden Kashmiri who always pines for the exhilarating rapture in which he would not have to sing every now and then; with Mahjoor "winter will pass off, and ice will melt away, yes, the spring shall come again".

Prof. J.L. Kaul's *Lol Lyrics*, published in 1945 in Roman script of Kashmiri with an accurate English translation, is the pioneer attempt in compilation of the scattered lore of our lyrics.

F. Folk Lore

Long after A. Stein and J.H. Knowles first introduced some salient facets of Kashmiri folklore, particularly folk-tales, to the English knowing world, the local authors, and subsequently the Jammu and Kashmir Art and Cultural Academy felt that this branch of literature also is worth exploration. Literary bodies like Bazm-e-Adab and Progressive Writers Congress provided the spade-work, and within 20 years, the elementary attempts at discovering the folklore revealed a vast field to researchers. Anthologies of folk – tales, such as *Bhartacha Loke Katha* (Publications Division, Governemnt of India), *Daleela* by Akhtar and Pushkar Bhan, and *Posha Ther* by Lala Rukh Publications, are the first successful compilations in Kashmiri prose..... The versified part of folk-lore can now be classified as under:-

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1. Lullabies: These include "nursery rhymes, cradle songs, harvest songs and even the boatman's chanty, riddles or even meaningless snatches". (J.K. Kaul). This genre varies in content and meaning both with the growth of age and change in situation. It is only after 1947 that this otherwise anonymous stock is classified as a distinct form, and we now have for example, children's Books which include for instance: *Poshmal* by S.N. Sadhu, *Mukhtahar* by Naji Munawar and Rahbar, *Baalmarayo* by S.N. Haleem and *Don Quixote* by Prof. Sadhu.

For the grown-up, we have:

2. Folk-Song: It is usually intensely subjective; its forms are varied and simple. It is "mostly a four-line stanza with a refrain intended to suit numerous situations in life; e.g, to supplicate spiritual patronage for the baby, cheer up a naughty youngster, buck up a bored artisan, or lighten the burden of a house wife or a weeder or a coolie dragging on a loaded cart". (Kaul). The eight commendable volumes of Kashmiri *Luka Bath* (1965-71) – one compiled jointly by Naji and Saqi and the other four by Saqi alone, the sixth, seventh and eighth respectively by Nazir, Pardesi and Sadhu, and Wafa Bhaderwahi – comprise the best specimens of almost all off-shoots of folksongs bequeathed to posterity.

3. Vanvun and Rov: The two forms are perhaps the oldest art forms of the folk-song exclusively "reserved for the fair-sex". Rov is a must for all ceremonies, such as 'Id, Shivratri, the month of Ramzan, etc. Vanvun is always "lighter in tune, varied in form, and centred round a particular occasion, as, for instance, heralding a prosperous future for the baby; while Rov has its own peculiarities". Prof. Kaul has graphically depicted it when he wrote "the country lasses and the mid-

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dle-aged dames come out (always after the sunset), divide themselves into two interlocked rows, their arms over one another's shoulders, and begin the swing-like movement of the whole file, one row advancing and the other receding, both keeping tunes to the dance tune of the Rov. These songs have relieved the tedium of the life of the illiterate women-folk, who find in them a sincere echo of their emotions".

In Rov alone the fair sex get a free chance to ejaculate their inner urges and suppressed aspirations. Gh. Mustafa Manzoor (b. 1906) and Gh. Hassan Driver (b. 1907) have added a lot to this otherwise anonymous branch of the folk-song.

G. Dastan Shayeri

A number of long classical tales are interwoven in songs appropriate to the various situations in the plot;' these songs form a distinct genre called Dastan-Sahyeri. Some of the tales are purely native, such as *Akanandun*, *Jehaar* and *Habba Khatoon*, while some others are of foreign origin; e.g, *Laila Majnoon*, *Haroon Rasheed*, *Gul-e-Sanober*", etc. Except Kabir Mir's *Zin-Mazoor* (Wood-cutter) all the pieces are anonymous, and at the mercy of the professional reciter (Kathagor), whose love for the old and even obsolete idiom and vocables can well be illustrated by one example of Mohammad Khaar (d. 1968) of Shahgund, who could, at the age of about ninety, recite exactly and faithfully 150 verses of Bahadur Ganai's *Akanandun* transmitted tradionally more than 300 years back. In view of the diminishing number of narrators, there is every apprehension of the loss of a major portion of this "Poetry", unless arrangements are made for its proper compilation.

H. Devotional Poetry

Lal Ded and Sheikh Noor-ud-Din Noorani are the first two Kash-

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miri poets whose major part of the non-mystic poetry falls under this category; of course, with one difference: Lal Ded bases her Vaakh poetry on Shaivite faith, and Nund Reshi his Shrukh on Islamic ethics. Both abhorred hypocrisy and ritualism in various creeds and exhorted listeners to seek purity of mind and good conduct irrespective of their creed. Numerous saints and disciples in the Reshi order and Shaivite cult carried the message on with the result that almost every poet deemed it his duty to bequeath to posterity some devotional songs in various art forms. In the entire gamut, we notice one major difference: non-Muslim poets use over Sankskritized and Muslims over-Persianized diction and style. From Sahab Kaul (d. 1676) to Krishna Razdan (d. 1925) on the one hand, and from Habibullah Nowshahri (d. 1617) to Haqqani (d. 1928) on the other hand, a long chain of poets have followed this trend in various forms – both in the language used and in the religious objectives propounded. There are some exceptions to the rule with regard to the theme, i.e, Muslim poets writing in the style of Shastra, e.g. Rahem Sahib, Shamus Faqir or Ahad Zargar, and Hindu poets singing eulogies to the Holy Prophet, e.g Sat Ram (d. 1934) or Anand Kaul (d. 1939); but these are not too many, though their attempts do "indicate the spirit of reverence for faith other than one's own". (Kaul).

Devotional poetry has branched into numerous fields: hymns (Munajaat) to God, eulogies (Naat) to the Prophet, panegyrics (Manquabat) to saints, in the Muslim group; and 'lilas', 'bhajans' and reformative poems in the Hindu group. The sources of the muse also vary correspondingly, Muslims derive their material from the *Holy Quran*, Traditions of the Propeht, Islamic History, Theology and Mysticism; Hindus base their verse on mythology, *Bhagvat Geeta*, *Puranas*, *KrishnaBhakti*, *Rama Bhakti* and *Trika Shastra*.

Taayib (d. 1914), Sana-ullah Kreeri (d. 1875), Nadim (d.1911), and Ja'id (d. 1908) have utilized almost their entire erudition in Naat

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and Munajaat; Lakhman Joo Bulbul (d. 1884) and Krishna Razdan (d. 1925) wrote 'lilas' 'bhajans', and reformative poems. Several others who have contributed a lot to other forms, have also excelled in their religious verse; e.g, Molvi Siddiquallah of Hajin (d.1900), Hassan Shah (d.1898), and Haqqani (d. 1928), Prakash Ram (d. 1898), Paramanand (d. 1879), and Nil Kanth Sharma (d.1971) come under this class. With this solid and mature background, the traditions of this theme continue more systematically and vigorously amongst the contemporary poets as well: Shams-ud-Din Gamgeen (b. 1904), Fitrat (b. 1898), G. R. Nazki (b. 1909), Almast (b. 1910), Fazil (1914), Tanha (d. 1968), Ghulam Mohd Mushtaq (b. 1934) and Zakhmi have produced excellent pieces in religious verse during the past two decades, both the classical and modern forms.

I. Mysticism

Down from Siti Kanth (13th century) to the contemporary Ahad Zargar (b. 1908), we have a trailing glaxy of mystic poets in every century; some like Lal Ded (d. 1400), Nund Reshi (d. 1438), Paramanand (d. 1879), Shamus Faqeer (d. 1905), and Zinda Kaul (d.1965), pioneers both in style and message; while a good number of them, though not all sublime in verse, yet mature enough in mystical vision, e.g. Rahiem Sahib (d.1869), Swach Kral (d.1891), and Rahman Dar (d.1900). it is true that in almost every period, most of our mystics, such as Kh. Habibullah Nowshahri (d.1617), Roupa Bhawani (d.1721), Aziz Darvish, Shah Gafoor (18th century) and Ahmad Batwari (d.1920), could rarely rise above the pantheistic school of mysticism, and that some others were exclusively concerned with their "trance ejaculations" rather than with poetic canons e.g, Momin Shah (early 19th century), Wahhab Khaar (d.1912) and Asad Parray (d.1916); it will, nevertheless, be too bold, even audacious, to evaluate their contribution to mystic verse within a para or so. The ever-ac-

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cumulating legacy in mystic poetry is so fecund in content and as diverse in form as to attract any critic to pick up numerous noteworthy traits, "wise saws and pithy sayings, didactic guidelines, and intuitive flashes, even in the otherwise obscure mystics – all converging on discovery of the inner self".

Before the advent of Islam, Kashmir was the nerve-centre of Trika and Buddhistic philosophies enunciating some beliefs and practices objectively akin to the Iranian mysticism of Muslim saints; the affinity, in course of time, flowered into a harmonious synthesis wherein the Muslim Muraquaba appeared identifiable with the Buddhistic Dhyana and Brahminic Samadhi in mystic discipline. From Rahem Sahib to Master Zinda Kaul (d.1965) in the higher rank, and from Mirza Kak to Samad Mir in the normal rank of mystics, we can gleen numerous verses identical in appeal and conviction though widely varying in form and diction. But this cultural link, though noteworthy, cannot be stretched too far to identify the two major branches provided by the indigenous and Iranian thought. Thus the Krishna Bhakti school represented by Paramanand and Ram Bhakti school represented by Nila Kanth Sharma pivot round the distinct Hindu concepts, while the Kubravi, Suhrawardi, Rishi, Chisti and Qadri schools of Muslim mystics, with very rare exceptions, trace back their genesis to Islamic tenets alone. Hence, the difference in their final objective in the process of self-realization. "Unlike the Nirvana", says R. A. Nicholson, "which is merely the cessation of individuality, 'fana', the passing away of the Sufi from his phenomenal existence, involves 'baqa', the continuance of his real existence". (*The Mystics of Islam,* page 149; 1914). One aspect of all mystic poets, without distinction of creed, is patent; all preached Catholicism, renunciation of worldly things, tolerance and the unitive state of the soul. But the keynotes to mysticism, viz, Light, Knowledge and Love, or the Ultima Thule of the 'Heavenward journey, i.e, absorbing into one Real

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Being – all these are so distinctly "comprehended" and "presented" that with no stretch of imagination can any one identify, say, the Raslila concept of Paramanand with the Haq-al-Haque of Haqqani. The Muslim mystics, like their Iranian predecessors in faith, "distinguish the organs of the spiritual communications, the heart (Qalb) which knows God, the spirit (Ruh) which loves Him, and the inner ground of the soul (Sirr) which contemplates Him". (Nicholson). In self-realizing process, we come across the "acquired that the subject has now assumed a rigidly conventional scope, wherein a good number of them have largely borrowed from Persian not only ideas "but the epithets and phrases– often stale enough—and also the imagery, symbolism and conceit", (Koul), such a blind mimicry has, no doubt, made most of the thought-content in Kashmiri mystic poetry "sentimental, platitudinous, morbidly gloomy and obscure". (Kaul). M. A. Kamil's 3–volume *Kashir Sufi Shayari* is the first anthology of our mystic poetry providing representative piece of almost all the eminent mystic poets, and touching major isues on the subject in its exhaustive introduction.

J. Humour

Even though Kashmiri literature is deficient in hamour when compared with other languages, its scattered stock is not hollow in content nor immature in spirit. Besides being known for Ladishah and Banda Jashan (th former entertaining the country-folk, and the latter providing mirth in open-air theatrical performance), a Kashmiri is justly "noted for his ready wit; retort, repartee, pun and play upon words coming naturally to his tongue". (J. L. Kaul). Maqbool Shah had given a start to caricaturing in verse a farmer and a Pir, but later poets added a lot to humorous verse, e.g, *Pahelnama*, *Muqdamnama*, *Malanama*, etc, Mahda Deek of Srinagar in quatrains and Wahab Sahib of Sangrama in long poems, spouted forth venomous lam-

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poon, streaked with humour, Abdul Ahad Nadim in his casual moods and Khezir Magrebi (b. 1921), Sayer (b. 1915), Bakwas, Parwaz (b. 1943), Ayub Sabir, Mohan, and Shahbaaz. As born caricaturists, they have versified ridiculous situations in most telling colloquial idiom. G. R. Santosh has begun the game in ornate prose.

The first weekly paper, *Guash* (1940), and later G. N. Khayal's weekly *Wattan* (1964), had reserved a column for humour; while Noor Mohammad, Booksellers, published the *Asun-ta-Gindun* and Dilsoze's immature but humorous skits, before the fifties.

It was left for M. A. Kamil to give us the most remarkable compilation in Kashmiri humour in his *Asan Traye*, published by the Cultural Academy in 1967. As for the comic characterization or radio features, Pushkar Bhan stands unparalleled where he "utilizes humour and wit with utmost dexterity and touching verve". (Kaul).

K. Shahr Aashobe

When a Kashmiri took to new fashions that misplaced him in society or to new values repugnant to the common belief, the poet came with his satire in *Shahr Aashobe*. This genre includes satire on corrupt officials, bamboozling priests, or even on natural calamities. It proved to be a literary weapon, and its object had to feel the sting for a pretty long time. Mahda Deek, Nadim and Wahhab have left behind some serious pieces centring round either humorous caricaturing or stinging lampoon.

L. Ladishah

It is the typical name for a folk ballad pungently comic-cum-satiric in text, and, historically speaking, a sullen reaction of a suppressed nation against tyranny, viz, major or deliberate 'mismanagement' of mundane affairs. It is distinguished for its "homely metaphor and picturesque portrayal of a ridiculous situation, in which a common

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Kashmiri finds himself in an autocratic regime" and it has proved to be a source of mental consolation for the enslaved folk during the centuries past. A major portion of this from is lost in verbal transmission by the illiterate bards; nevertheless we still possess some very fine pieces in the Ladishah. Hakeem Habibullah (d. 1905), Munnawer Shah of Kulsoo, (d.1925) and Lala Lakhman (d.1947), are recognized masters of this form; while Noor Mohammad Roshan and Mohd. Ali Kanwal are their contemporary prototypes, who have added both vigour and colour to this form of the folk ballad.

M. Elegy (Marthiya Or Marsiya)

Its origin is inferred in the Chak period (1561-86), and it continued expanding and developing till late in the 19th century. But it remained as if "reserved" with a group of professional reciters called "Zakirs", who made business of it every year, particularly during the first ten days of Moharrum, the first Hijri month of the year. Zakirs stuck to the rule not to let the elegies be published, for their services would then be dispensed with. That is why we possess only two collections of the Marsiya, one printed in Lahore before 1920, and the other *Osh-ta-Aab* in Srinagar in 1955, though there are innumerable collections with the miserly Zakirs. Elegy in Kashmiri is written in long, slow – moving metres appropriate to the tragedy at Karbala. These display learning and rich allusiveness in their "bombastic or sentimental diction".

Although the language is often over-Persianized, yet some of the classical ones retain several terms that have now been either replaced or forgotten. Elegy in Mathnavi form can be read in Syed Amir Shah's *Jang-e-Iman-e-Hanafiya*, A. G. Ashique's and Ghulam Hassan Dar's two mathnavis under the same name: *Rouzat-u-Shudha*. A good number of classical elegy–writers preferred to die unsung; e.g, Khwaja Husain Mir, Kh. Dayim, Hakeem Abdullah, Kh. Baquir, Mirza

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Abdul Qasim, Kh. Safdar and Ahmad Ali Ghazi. Elegy in the conventional form gained full momentum in the 19th century when Hakeem Azeem (d.1852), Mohd. Yousuf (d.1885), Mustafa Ali (d.1896), Munshi Mohd. Ali (d.1902) and Hakeem Habibullah (d.1905) added new dimensions to this form. From amongst the 20th century poets who have made a name we find Hakeem Hussain Ali (d.1919), Hakeem Gh. Rasool (d.1930), Munshi Mohd. Abbas (d.1945), and the contemporary Munshi Mohd. Sadique–all enriching the form with new ideas studded on the classical theme.

N. Quatrains (Rubaiyat) and Couplets (Qitaat)

Before Mirza Arif (b.1910), only a few poets of eminent rank like Wahhab wrote quatrains, while the majority abstained from experimenting on this form because of its rigid rules of prosody. Mirza Arif made it his forte, and, in effect, gave a lead to the younger generation, though, it must be admitted, a major portion of modern tetrastich verse does not follow the classical 'Hazj' metre. Even Mirza Arif himself, and Khayyal, while translating the celebrated Umar Khayyam could not follow the original in the metre. Thus the bulk of modern four-line stanzas can technically be classed as 'Du-Baitee' or couplets akin to a quatrain only in the rhyme Scheme of aaba.

Following Mirza Arif, G. R. Azad and Nawaz have added a lot to both the forms. G. R. Nazki's "Namroodnama" and G.R. Azad's "Kahkashan" are the two noteworthy works hitherto pulished on Qitaat and Rubaiyat, both "revealing precision, adroit phrase and economy of style".

O. Free Verse and Blank Verse:

There are some remnants of both these forms in our elegy, but the polish and vigour injected into these by the progressive writers after 1947 unfold altogether a new turn, particularly towards modernity in

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outlook, theme and diction. Despite the traditionalists' opposition, it had become a fashion with the majority of younger poets to start with free verse free from all canons of prosody – but the blank verse is not as easy a job for even the mature group. Nadim, Rahi and Kamil are the masters of technique in both the forms, while Firaq, Santosh and Roshan have also a right to be included among the harbingers of the new trend.

As for the younger group, it is very diffcult to make a choice from the host whose merit in other forms has already been acknowledged. Sajood Sailani, Gauhar, M. Nirash, Ajir, Betaab, Massrat, Shahid Badgami, Farhad, Saadi, Aatish, Rusul Pompur, Manzoor Hashmi, Tanha Nizami, Reh, Kanwal, Chaman, Gash, and Aash appear promising enough in free verse and, to an appreciable extent, in blank verse as well. Unfortunately, most of their works have remained uncompiled till now.

P. Prose

Prose writing has systematically begun from 1947 onwards when most of the intellectuals and men of letters collectively felt an urge to enrich Kashmiri not only in pure literature but in works on technical subjects as well. Various organizations sprang up to co-ordinate the literary output (in prose and poetry) in their 'official' Journals; but the Journals proved too limited for literary works of note. Nor was there any regular agency prepared to undertake publication of books without, as was the tradition till then, grabbing the copyright. With this environment, "not even a quarter of what has been written has been printed, and even a considerable part of what has been printed is to be gleaned from pages of magazines now defunct". (Prof. Kaul). Hence numerous notable works, e.g., *Pants Ayeen* (Five Constitutions) by Prof. Fazili, *Ilm-e-Mayeshat* (Economics) by Prof. Soze, and *Adam Mor* by Mirza Aarif still await publication.

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It was only in the late fifties that the Cultural Academy (Kashmir) and, to some extent, the Sahitya Academy (Delhi) came to the rescue of local writers. The following individual maiden attempts in prose, during the past two decades, proved outstanding enough to win the Sahitya Academy and Cultural Academy awards:

1. Sahitya Akademi Award – Winning Prose Works:
2. *Sat Sangar* (Short Stories). 1958. by Akhtar Mohy-ud-Din;
3. *Kashr- e–Zaban - e-Hund Illaquawar Phaira.* (Linguistics), 1968 by A. K. Tak.
4. *Maqualaat* (Critical Discourses) , 1970 , Prof. Mohy-ud-Din Hajini;
5. *Suya* (Drama), 1973, Ali Mohd. Lone.
6. *Gasher Maunaar* (Biography and Criticism), 1975, Gh. Nabi Khayal; (In contrast to these five works, only three collections – Prof. Rahi's *Nouroz-e-Saba*, Masterji's *Sumran*, & Amin Kamil's *Lava te Prava*– have won the Sahitya Akademi Awards).
7. Cultural Academy Award–Winning Prose Works:
8. *Kashre-NasrechKitab* (A Book of Prose in Kashmiri), 1962, Mohy-ud-Din Hajini;
9. *Kashre AdbechTawareekh* (A History of Kashmiri Literature), 1966, Autar Krishan Rahbar;
10. *SayasatechPar-e-Zan.* (Introduction to Political Science), 1970, Prof. M. A. Fazili.
11. *Adem Mor* (Anatomy), Mirza Arif;
12. *Mujrim* and *Myul* (Novels), G. N. Gauhar;
13. *Baal Marayo* (Short Stories), Bansi Nirdosh;
14. *Loosemet Tarakh* (Short Stories), Gh. Mohd. Sufi;
15. *Pata LaraanParbat* (Short Stories), Prof. H. K. Kaul.

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The Union Ministry of Education has also launched a competitive scheme of prizes for literary works in regional languages, and till now three of the Kashmiri prose-works–*Wethe HendMallar* by Prof. S.L. Sadhu, *Panchayatta Gandhiji* by Farhat Gilani, and *GuruGobind Singh* (A Translation) by Bansi Nirdosh – have won the prizes.

It appears surprising how, within so short a period Kashmiri prose branched off to dry fields with full exuberance; e.g, *Sargam* (3 vols) on musical notations, by S. Abdul Aziz, *Bagh-e-Arooz* on prosody by Khezir Magrebi. On the one hand, the basic books on physical sciences for laymen, such as *Wutsa-Prang* by Prof. Sadhu, *Molel Tajruba* by A.M. Wani, and *Scienasok Rang* by Publications Division (Delhi), gave a fillip to the budding writers in the technical subjects; while, on the other hand, travelogues like Cheenuk Safar by Mirza Arif, and Slavamir by Akhtar Mohy-ud-Din, opened up new vistas for widening the scope of prose. Besides, direct translations into Kashmiri of foreign classical works added not only much-needed variety but depth and richness to the 30 years-old prose. Amongst these may be included Gorky's *Mother* (Russian) by A. M. Lone, Rahnuma's *Pyamber* (Persian) by Dr. S. D. Ahmad, Aristotle's *Poetica* (Greek) by G. N. Khayal, Tolstoy's *War and Peace* by Muzuffar Azim, *Alaf Laila* (Arabic) by Prof. Mohy-ud-Din Hajini, and *Bhagavad Gita* (Sanskrit) by Nila Kanth Sharma and Premi.

As for pure prose, the short story has become the forte of about 50% writers, though the works of even some of the mature authors, such as Noor Shah, Deepak Kaul, Gh. Nabi Baba, Prof. H. K. Kaul, G. R. Santosh, and H. Bharati, are yet scattered in various Journals only. *Kathe Manza Kath* by Amin Kamil *Aalao* by Taj Begum, *Adam Chhu Yethy Badnaam*" by Bansi Nirdosh, *Zaini-Zool* by Dr. Raina, and *Haarisaat* by Taskeen have been hailed by critics as successful experiments in this form – of course, besides the award–winning creative works referred to above. Even collections like Prof. Sadhu's *Qisas* or A. K. Rahbar's *Tabarukh* are not below the standard.

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Q. Novel

It must be frankly admitted that Kashmiri is deficient in novels; only two novels, Akhtar's *Dod Dag* (1963) and Gauhar's *Mujrim* (1969), can be adjudged as coming up to the mark. The notable translations of foreign novels include Gorky's *Mother* by A. M. Lone, Prem Chand's *Gaudan* by Roshan, and Tagore's *Chokher Bali* by Prof. P. N. Pushp.

Like novels, the novelette also is in its infancy-stage. Journals like *SounAdab*, *Sheeraza*, *Koshur Adab*, and *Nayb* have recently begun drawing writers towards this branch of prose, though, in effect, they appear better in essays than in the novelette.

R. Criticism

Till 1947, the famous poet Abdul Ahad Azad alone had the cheek to criticize a poet in a dispassionate manner, and from amongst the Journals, the *Pratap* (Magazine) alone would welcome publishing critical comments on celebrated poets even of Mahjoor's stature; otherwise, the general tradition of criticism was confined to either hurling a satire upon or parodying a verse of a poet, and then declaring a ceasefire between the two men of letter. Within the first decade we saw Professors Kaul, Hajini, Pushp, Rahi, and Firaq, and the celebrated poets Nadim, Kamil, and Arif, chiselling the taste and norms of literature in prose and poetry, Radio Kashmir also contributed a lot in its regular programmes on poets, prose-writers, and their works. Once the rationale was provided criticism, literary and cultural organizations at the District and Tehsil levels began evaluating the critical canons in the East and in the West, both of classical and modern ages. Almost all colleges and Higher Secondary Schools have now assigned a permanent section in their magazines for criticism of Kashmiri literature. M. Y. Teng, Faroque Nazki, S. N. Zutshi, Saqi, Lone, Rahbar, and Khayal have also added a good deal of literary criticism to

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literature during the two decades. Prof. Hajini's *Kashre NasrechKitab* and *Maquallaat* contain some articles on this subject, while Prof. Kaul's *Studies in Kashmiri* is the finest work of criticism on Kashmiri Literature written in English till now.

V. Drama

Drama in Kashmiri had touched a high pitch in Sultan Zain-ul-Aabideen's time (1420-70), when Bhodah Bhatta wrote his *Zaina Vilasa* and when the stage-plays enjoyed royal patronage. The contemporary historian, Srivara, reports in his *Zain-Tarangni* that an actress-singer could depict 49 emotions in her dance as harmoniously as the musical cadence demanded. Sultan Hassan Shah surpassed all his predecessors in synthesizing the local fine arts with those of the Iranian and Indian prototypes. Drama, as a distinct branch of literature, though mostly preserved in verbal transmission, continued flourishing till the fall of Chak dynasty in 1586 A.D. With the advent of foreign rule, decline in all forms of Kashmiri literature was quite and expected misfortune; consequently, the folk – taste had to survive through the professional bards, who, in their turn, reduced the stage-drama to a "clumsy performance in the open field". The Banda-Jashan became 'a sort of open air village folk – theatre managed by companies of professional players or minstrels depicting social ills and bureaucratic tyranny, rarely alluding to some historic theme such as in Darza Pather. This degraded practice continued till the present century, when Nand Lal Kaul wrote *Satech Kahwat* (The Toutchstone of Truth) and three other less known plays *RamunRaj* (The Reign of Shri Ram) *Paz Pativrata* (Savitn), and *Dayun Lol* (Devotee's Affection). These were over-Sanskritized in diction. After him, Tara Chand Trissal (d.1948), wrote *PremechKahwat* (1938) and three minor plays–*Akanandun*, *Ramavtar*, and *PazrechKahwat*–with the same mental background as that of Nandlal, but in simpler diction, till

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Mohi-ud-Din Hajini, while a college student, wrote in 1939 his *Grees Sund Ghara* the first three – act play in Kashmiri on Shakespearean pattern, depicting faithfully the social norms and the exploiting agents in Kashmir. It is probably the only work in prose which sold in 3 editions within 5 years. In 1947 Kashmir became a war–area, and Kashmiri writers fell into two camps separated by the line of actual control. However, the young playwrights asserted themselves and began writing seriously. Of the 350 old drama features reported by J. L. Kaul to have been broadcast by Radio Kashmir till the end of 1967, a sizeable number merit publication, but have not been published–Heaven knows why. Similarly, the works of playwrights living beyond line of actual control (Taus Banihali, Naaz Kulgami, Ahmad Shamin, Masood Tabassum, etc.) are not available in the market for assessment; hence it will be too unjust to evaluate them in absentia or to adjudge the worth of such other playwrights on the basis of the skits, features, and radio – plays broadcasted now and then on either side of the line of actual control. D. N. Nadim's *NekitaBadi* (Good and Evil), Kamil's *Habba Khatoon*, Wali's *Zoon*, Akhtar's *Nast-e-Hynd Sawal* are some of the first mature attempts during the fifties. The two operas – Nadim's *Bomber ta Yamberzal* (1953) and Kamil's *Bomburta Lolar* (1961) – are, in fact, the finest pieces in the form. One of our celebrated legends. *Heemal Nagiray*, has been woven into two forms, an opera by Roshan and Nadim, and a five-act play by Pandit J. L. Jalali, the latter coming up to the standard at least in the theme, if not in dramatic technique. Some plays, like Bhana's *Supnavasudatum* translated by N. K. Sharma, are yet to be published. The Academy of Art, Culture and Languages has, since 1958, been organizing play – competitions every year and awarding prizes for play – writing, production, acting and also staging the prize-winning plays in Tagore Hall, *Yiti ChuBanan* (This too Happens) by M. S. Butt, *Research* by Pushkar Bhan and Som Nath Sadhu, *Taqdeer* by Mohd. Subhan

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Bhagat, *Taqdeersaaz* by Ali Mohd. Lone, and *Hawas* by M. L. Kemu have successfully been staged in the Hall.

There are now a number of classical dramas translated into Kashmiri under the direction of the Sahitya Akademi, Delhi. Tagore's *Mukta Dhara* by A. M. Lone, *Red Oleanders* (Wazel Gualla), *Malini*, *Sacrifice* and *Chandalika* by Noor Mohd. *Roshan*, *Dak Ghar* and *Raza-ta-Raane* by M. A. Kamil, *SontukAtagath* by Mirza Arif, Ibsen's *Ghosts* (Tsay) by Akhtar Mohy-ud-Din, and *Wild Duck* (Thuj) by Somnath Zutshi. Independent attempts to translate foreign plays are also worth mention; Shakespeare's *Othello* by Nadim and *Julius Caesar* by Naji Munawer, Tagore's *Chitra*, and Gold Smith's *She Stoops to Conquer* by A. K. Rahbar are some of the precious additions to our dramatic literature. Despite the technical drawbacks, a number of plays staged by Bhagat Theatre, Akingam (under the directions of M. L. Kemu), and *Hero Machama* and *WaktukLukman* by Pushkar Bhan, have been presented well on the stage. Prof. S. L. Sadhu's *Birbal* is a historical play, the first attempt in the form, but neither sublime in theme nor viable in style.

Though there is a long tradition in almost all higher educational institutions to stage plays written in Urdu or Hindi and occasionally in Kashmiri, and though we have a number of playwrights engaged in writing one-act plays, skits and shadow–plays, it must be admitted that till 1967 "most of these make a contribution more to prose than to drama" (J.L. Kaul). Numerous plays staged by various Dramatic Clubs before 1947 remained confined to social reform or local mythology, and most of those staged or broadcast between 1947 and 1967 could not raise the level to the artistic standards. It is only after 1967 that we find the balance gradually turning in favour of maturity in thought, and eloquence, forcefulness and economy in diction.

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Historical Background of Kashmiri Language

Kashmir State (including Jammu and Frontier Provinces) covers 87471 square miles, extending from 32°.17 to 36°.56 N and 73°.26 to 80°.30 E, but the celebrated Valley, at an average height of six thousand feet above the sea-level, is about 84 miles in length and 20 to 25 miles in breadth. Kashmiri Language is the mother tongue of this happy valley and of contiguous illaqas stretching to Poonch, Rajouri, Bhaderwah and Kishtwar. "The language area of Kashmiri and its dialects is approximately ten thousand square miles in the Jammu and Kashmir State" (B. B. Kachru). There are small settlements in Himachal Pradesh (Grierson) Zanskar, (A K TAK) and in Kargil Tehsil where Kashmiri continues to be the spoken word with local variations in tune and word-structure. According to Census Report of India, 1961, Kashmiri is spoken by 19, 14446 persons, whereas the Report lists the following speakers of its dialects:

a) Kishtwari 11633 b) Siraji 19978
c) Pogali 9508 d) Bungwali 550
e) Kaghani 152 f) Kohistani 81

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Most of these dialects are spoken in the "Transition Zones", on the border, and are therefore under a deep influence of Pahari and Lahandi. These figures exclude migrants to India and Pakistan before and after 1947. My rough estimate of all Kashmiri speaking persons comes to about 25 lakhs.

It is the oldest language of the State though historically traceable to Raja Jayapida's (751-782 A.D) time and etymologically to Pisach period, commencing centuries before the Christian era. Kashmiri has withstood for centuries all the "onslaughts" of foreign languages, especially Sanskrit and Persian, and retained its individuality throughout its development, absorbing and naturalizing more than 33 per cent of its vocabulary from foreign sources.

Its base is a Dard language closely akin to Shina; Ernst Kohan, Ralph L. Turner, George Grierson and Jules Bloch have in succession asserted that the Dardic / Languages (Kashmiri, Shina, Kalash, Pushai and Tirahi), belong to Indo-Aryan group but "these did not pass through the Indian languages development", whereas Mr. Morgenstrene and M.B. Emeneau claim that the Dardic family is a separate branch developed from Indo-Iranian. Mr. Mohammad Shuja Namus asserts that "the Dard group is in-between the Perso-Aryan and Indo-Aryan group, in its stock of words and phrases. It is a smaller group compared to the other two, but possesses its own peculiarities.

Grierson further argues that the Pisach was the cover-term used in Sanskrit to refer to these languages. Kashmiri is the only language of Dardistan that "has reached the literary civilization" (Grierson); even now "some of the basic terms that are retained longest on any language, however mixed, such as the earlier numerals and the words for father and mother, are closely akin to corresponding Shina words, and are therefore of Pisach origin "(Kachru). The deeper tinge of this historical basis is visible in the Drass ilaqa which is cut off from the Valley by the Zojilla pass. "Its basis, its phonetic system, its cadence,

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its syntax, its prosody, is Pisach "(Grierson), and "it must be classified as such not as a Sanskritic form of speech".

Local tradition also holds that the first settlers in the Valley, Nagas, were out-numbered by Dards (Pisachas) from the North, whose word became the current coin for the Valley long before the Mauryan era.

The Pisach were followed by Aryans from India or Central Asia. "Kashmir became the most celebrated home of Sanskrit Study" and with that, "its indigenous literature has grown up mostly under the influence of Sanskrit models". It is ony very recently discovered that, besides Sanskrit, Kashmiri language has received a good impact from the Hebrew as well (Khawaja Nazir Ahmad's *Jesus in Heaven on Earth,* 1953, and Dr. A.A. Quraishi's *Asrar-e-Kashir*,1955). Many surnames, place names, and common terms are today traced to Hebrew origin. Even though the topic demands further exploration, Israelite influence on Kashmiri customs, habits and even psychic trends cannot be brushed aside altogether. Hence it is quite plausible that in naturalizing Sanskrit and Hebrew terms, the original Dardic language of Kashmiri must have passed through the Prakrit stage and next through the Apbhrarmasa stage when the local variations abounded to a large extant.

Mr. Hemchander, the noted scholar of linguistics includes Pisach also in the Prakrit group, and the latest historian, Mr. A.K. Rehber, classifies the evolution of Kashmiri on three distinct periods viz (a) Pisach Period from 1500 B.C. to 500 B.C. (b) Prakrit Period from 500 B.C. to 100 A.D. and (c)Apbhramas Period from 1000 A.D. to 1200 A. D. The last-mentioned period should have been postulated to begin from at least 800 A.D, for the transformation would not be imagineable within two hundred years only.

Unfortunately, we possess no record of any linguistic nature about the Pisach except a recurring reference to Gondh's *Bhrahat Katha* which is lost in the mists of history. It is, therefore, solely on the in-

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ternal evidence of Kashmiri vocabulary that we can pick up the "original base of words", before the first extant work *Mahanay Prakash* was written by Siti Kentha probably in the 12th century. We know also that Kshemendra (12th century) wrote the *Sanskrit Bharaat Katha Manjri*, an abridged edition of Gonadha's monumental work and the Somadeva (11th or 12th century) preserved in his *Katha Sarat Saghra* major portions (or perhaps the entire) *Bharaat Katha*. It is therefore fairly inferable to suppose that Pisacha literature could not have flourished to its full bloom under the Collossus of Sanskrit that bestrode the mental horizon of all intellectuals in Kashmir till the 14th century when this trend received a lasting set-back.

Rentchen Shah, the Budhist King of Kashmir embraced Islam in 1325 A.D. and shortly afterwords Shahmiri dynasty came into power, proclaiming Persian as the court language of Kashmir. It continued to be as such till 1885. A.D, with the result that the new converts to Islam, forming the majority, began unconsciously and consciously borrowing from Persian to the extant of boring the lover of pure Kashmiri. Intellectuals, both Hindus and Muslims, vied with one another in Persian scholarship while the native language was left at the mercy of common people. Thus we see in it, writes. Grierson, a language caught in the act of transforming itself from the analytic to the synthetic stage, rearing up for about 15 hundred years under Sanskrit, and for more than five hundred years under Persian, mirroring in its words, tunes, models and styles either Sanskrit or Persian influence. It has further developed certain characteristics peculiar to itself.

1. "It has", says Prof. J.L. Kaul, "semi-vowels, shades of vowels, and it differs from other Indian languages in having silent or nearly-silent vowels which may modify the pronunciation of the preceding vowels.

Hence we count only 38 letters in Kashmiri even though there are 45 of them, for it possesses many vowel sounds that are not easily

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reduced to writing. Grierson has also admitted that owing to "extensive use of epenthesis, its correct pronunciation is difficult to a foreigner".

2. In addition to its intrinsic intricacy, the foreign influence has given it two forms christened by George Grierson as Musalman Kashmiri that abounds in words borrowed from Persian and Hindu-Kashmiri which according to him is free from admixture with Persian, with its copious vocabulary composed of honest Tadbhavas. From 1885, Urdu and English have jointly influenced the two forms with the result that the difference is day-by-day vanishing.

3. Due to change of script, a number of times, its phonetic structure and phonological apertures have often been mismanaged.

The earliest script used for Kashmiri was Sharda, now used only by some Pandits for writing horoscopes, etc. Probably, Sharda developed to tis full stature in the 10th century A.D. "Its formation and its symbols are slightly different from the Deva-Nagari, and every alphabet has a name" (J.L .Kaul). It fell into partial disuse during the Shahmiri and Chak rule (1339-1685 A.D.) and was completely replaced by the Nastalique characters after the Mughal conquest of Kashmir. With only a few exceptions, all the works published before 1947 were printed in the same unreformed Nastalique script.

It was replaced by Naskh (Arabic) script in 1948 with a code for phonetic demands. In 1955, a Rivising Committee recommended adoption of Nastalique with certain modifications of the additional letters and diacritical marks. This has now become the popular script even though Mr. J.L. Kaul and Mr. M.A. Kamil still want to make it over-scientific by reforming it further.

Except for the controversy on the script till 1955, the language has otherwise a glorious history for the last six hundred years, that has entitled it to be recognized as one of the sixteen regional languages in the constitution of India. The J&K University conducts three exam-

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inations in Kashmiri, i.e Proficiency (Talib), High Proficiency (Mahir) and Honours (Kamil)

As for its phonology or detailed morphology, no justice can be done to such a vast subject within a para or so, the study of the following works, besides other information, will prove useful in the comparative analysis of the broad principles on syntax, phonology and morphology of the Kashmiri Language.

1. "Grammar and Vocabulary of Kashmiri". *Journal R.A.S. Bengal.* Vol: X1841.
2. *The language and races of Dardistan by* G.W. Leetner 1877 Lahore.
3. *Linguistic Survey of India.* Vol. VIII.George Greirson.1919 A.D.
4. *The Manual of Kashmiri Language.* Oxford: 1911.
5. "Linguistic Classification of Kashmiri". *Indian Antiquary* Vol. XIIV, 1915.
6. *Indo-Iranian Fronteir Languages* Vol. VI, 1944 by Morgenstierne.
7. "The Origin of Shina Language".*Pakistani Linguistics,* 1963 Lahore by Mohammad Shuja Namus.
8. *A Grammatical Skekch of Kashmiri.* University of Illinois, U.S.A. 1966 by B.B. Kachru.
9. *Studies in Kashmiri.* 1968 by Professor J.L. Kaul
10. *Kashre-Zaban-e-Hynd Ilaqa War Phaira.* Abdul Khaliq Tak.

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Outlines of the Culture of Kashmir

Mr. Raymond Williams in his book *Culture and Society* (Published in 1958), says that "before the eighteenth century Cuture primarily meant the tending of natural growth, and then, by anology, a process of human training". Later it came to mean a lot; first "a general state or habit of the mind"; secondly, "the general body of arts", and finally "the whole way of life: material, intellectual and spiritual. In fact, the development of culture is perhaps the most striking amongst all the terms in relation to the collective personality of a nation. Hence all historical changes in our social, economic and political life do come under the purview of culture; and you will agree with me that it is next to impossible to summarise the entire development of a nation's culture in a single paper. I shall, therefore, only refer to some of the basic and salient aspects with a view to stimulating your interest in the subject. The next part of the topic is "Kashmir", which for this paper will be confined to Kashmiri speaking regions of the State, thereby excluding Ladakh, Jammu and all illaqas beyond Gurez, Teetwal and Uri.

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Everyone of us will agree that Kashmir, even as a small but intelligent nation, does possess its own distinct culture. It may be on relative scrutiny good or bad, nevertheless it has its own history, pattern and fixibility.

Let us begin with the earliest concept of culture, i.e, the genealogy of Kashmiris. Till recent times, it was agreed by almost all writers on Kashmir that the earliest Kashmiris were presumably the descendents of the Nagas whose numerous traditions, customs and even beliefs still persist, (of course in an orientated form) in a section of Kashmiri Pandits. Then came Pischachas (Dards) from the North. Aryans (particularly Brahmans) from Bharat (or Central Asia) and finally Muslims mostly from Iran. It was a corollary to this cursory observation of the ethnic process that the majority of Kashiriologists overlooked come very subtle (but till now hidden) aspects of the main racial groups whose composite progeny inhabit the valley today. But now three epoch making works on the subject-I mean the late Justice Kilam's *History of Kashmiri Pandits*, Khwaja Nazir Abmed's *Jesus in Heaven on Earth* and Dr. Aziz Ahmed Qureshie's *Asrar-e-Kasheer* have put forward variegated points of view on the origin of Kashmiris and have thus opened new vistas for research. Justice Kilam links the genealogy of Kashmiri Pandits to the Reshi patriarchs, whereas Dr. Qureshi's *Asrar i Kasheer* asseverates that almost the majority of Kashmiri, including particularly, Pandits, are the direct descendents of the lost ten tribes of Israel. The treatment of the subject by the former is based more on legend and mythology. Whereas the latter generalizes historical quotations to the farthest stretch of imagination. In contrast to these two writers, Khawaja Nazir Ahmed, himself a Kashmiri, follows a middle path and confines his thesis mainly to the Israeli influence on our culture, and their first settlements in Kashmir. (It may incidentally be noted by the Tourist Department that if the Khwaja Sahib's discoveries are

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collaborated, Kashmir will attract entire Jewish, Christian and Muslim world, for it is for the first time during the last 33 centuries that the grave of Moses (Peace be upon him) has been located near Bandipore in Boot village, and Dr. Aziz Ahmed, following Khwaja Sahib's line of research locates Aaron's grave in Harwan). The accurate genealogy of a nation in a country like Kashmir is never possible, though we may be precise in some particular details to a large extent. Kashmir had given refuge to some aboriginal tribes probably before Nagas, and these were Nisadas, Kiratas, Domba and Chandals. According to Kalhan, most of the Nisad tribe were boatmen, presumably the earliest forefathers of a section of Kashmniri Hanjis. Kirates were wild game hunters, and I feel the present tsantse group that has ever since been a segregated class, is the progeny of Kirates, Dombas and Chandals also have their off spring in Kashmir, dispite their being socially degraded through all ages. Our historians say the Chandals have often been used by rulers as body-guards, home-guards or palace-guards.

In contrast to these aboriginal tribes, Nagas were comparatively tha first civilized settlers who are reported to have cultivated saffron, discovered copper and bequeathed to posterity serpent-worship, adoration (and later deification) of springs; besides a good number of Naga myths and legends are still alive in the valley. The ever green romance of Nagirai and Heemal is their last and the only contribution to our literary culture. We have two springs in the name of Heemal and Nagirai situated respectively in Yarwun and Balpore villages of the Shopian Tehsil. Some surnames such as Nag, Nagi, Takhsh, etc, and some localities such as Anantnag, Waski Nag, Mahapadam Shankhpol, etc. are traceable to Nagas. Nagas, in addition, saturated the local astrology and the fate of Kashmiris was imagined to be under the spiritual spell of eight Naga dynasties and later the entire valley was "guarded" by "three chief Nagas" ,i.e, Nila, Padma and

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Sankha (Kalhan). Their memory is still ritualized by Kashmiri Pandits in Anant Chhudash and Warn Panchmi festivals.

As for the Pischachas, our race-ridden historians have depicted them in the most upleasant colours though according to Dr. S.C. Rays' research "the majority of the present Kashmirian people appear to be their descendants". Beside, theirs is the fundamental contribution to our culture. I mean the basic structure of the Kahsmiri Language itself. It was only in 1887 A.D. that the eminent Orientalist, Ernest Kohan first suggested that Kashmiri Language is a branch of the Dardic group and that all the later immigrant languages especially Sanskrit and Persian have so profusely influenced the original dialect that the Dardic basis appeared as if completely effaced. His successors in phonetic and etymological structure of the Kashmiri Language confirmed Mr. Kohan's suggestion, and it was further inferred that all villages ending with "hoom" such as Dodarhoom, Burzahoom, Drabahoom, etc, were the earliest Dard (Or Pischacha) settlements in the Valley. Dard and Pichacha are now synonymous terms in Kashmiriology. Their only literary work mentioned by our historians was Gonadha's *BharatKatha* last centuries back. Some scholars in linguistics have affirmed that Ksemendra (11th Century) in his *Bharat Katha Mangri* and Some Deva (11th Century) in his *Katha Sart Sagar* have preserved in Sanskrit most of Gonadha's tales. There are only a few words of Dard origin retained unchanged till now, e.g. branth, denj, bash, pun, thop, etc. while numerous other words are used in an altered form, e.g, bata, atha and nus for bye, hatha, nato. The Dard race has given us the historical heroine, Habba Khatoon, who according to the folklore was the daughter of a Bhota Rajia and not of Abli Rather as was supposed by the late Mahjoor. We have a mountain and a spring situated between the village of Churwan and Achoora in the Gurez region still commemorating the name of Habba Khatoon. If tradition recorded by the Walter Lawarance and Hassan Shah

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has any historic value, it was Habba Khatoon, who along with the last but one independent king of Kashmir, Yusuf Shah Chak, and discovered Glumarg as the loveliest spot of the valley in summer. She, as Queen or court singer of the king is reported to have synthesized the Iranian and Kashmirian cadence in to a distinct school of music, besides in inaugurating the romantic "Lol-lyric" school in our poetry. Shri D. N. Nadim has suggested that the reputed "Darza Pather" staged for centuries by our bards, is in essence a play depicting the defeat of Dards by the Aryans, who succeeded them in dominating Kashmir.....

The date of Aryan arrival in Kashmir is lost in the mists of mythology, superstition and legend. It is plausible that the Kashmiri Pandit Calendar beginning from 3075-76 B.C. might have some reference to the first group of Aryan settlers. Again, it is yet a controversial topic whether they came directly from the Central Asia or Aryavartha identifiable with the present Punjab and Haryana. One can only guess that they entered the Valley as pilgrims from the plains, and were retreating to the neighbouring countries, before the winter set in, till some of them were acclimatized to live in Kashmir. This is what the Chandradeva myth about "the handing over or revelation" of the *NilamatPurana* symbolizes. Chandardeva missed leaving Kashmir at the proper time and Nilanag Saved him by giving the *Nilmat Purana* to enchant or subdue the natives for Aryan colonization of the valley. Though the first two editors of the *Nilmat Purana*, Professors Kanji Lal and Zadoo fix its probable date in the 7th century, legend and tradition carry its date back to thousands of years. It provides, according to Bahler "a real mine of information regarding the sacred places and their legends". Kashmir's first king Aryan Govinda-Ist is said to have taken part in the battle of Mahabharta (Kalhan). According to Pandit Ratnakar and Hassan Shah, the last of the 35 Pondva kings Sunder Sain, ruled Kashmir from 2735-2692 B.C.,

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when a devastating earth quake overflooded the capital, Sandhamat Nagar, where we have the Wular lake to day.

If tradition, cherished round the Wular for the last 4671 odd years can be given any credence, Badshah was advised by the local natives to construct the Zaina-Lank exactly where the central place of worship in Sundhamathagar was believed to have been submerged. In the folk usage of Kashmir, we even now find that monuments in ruined condition or in grand style are named Pandou Tsola (Pandwa's mansion or hearth) thereby reminding us that Pandvas must have constructed huge buildings in Kashmir during their rule.

With the advent of Aryans in Kashmir, racial superiority complex gave birth to caste-system which could not be eradicated completely even when the majority embraced Islam where there is no sanction for caste. The majority of Muslim priests are still casts-ridden because their collective unconscious is more akin to race than to the faith.

The next Aryan legacy to the Valley was Hinduism which, despite its cultural link with the Bharatiya Hinduism, presented some distinct features. It assimilated the local Nag-mat, added its own quota to the new synthesis, and often reached very close to monotheism in its philosophical outlook. Similarly, a number of rituals, customs, and festivals distinguished the Kashmirian faith, with the result that in due course of ecclesiastical development; the entire India had to bow to Kashmir for the true interpretation of Hindu sacred scriptures.

As for the introduction of their religious language (Sanskrit), we possess no historical evidence to date it. According to Kalhan, the first Sanskrit poet was one Kundak who lived in the reign of Raja Ranjan, i.e, 2nd Century A.D. Even though the major part of the Sanskrit literature produced by Kashmiris is lost in the political upheavals, we are proud to retain as much of the Sanskrit lore as to surpass, at least inquality, the total output of Brahmans in India. The

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bibliography of our ancestor's works in Sanskrit, especially from the 7th to 13th century will require a complete volume. Suffice it say that two anthologies of Sanskrit poetry compiled by two scholars, Valabh Dev and Shri Var contained respectively selections from 360 to 380 Kashmiri poets. Out of twenty classical grammars in Sanskrit, eighteen were composed in Kashmir. Sharda, Bijbehara and Srinagar, as centres of Sanskrit learning attracted the entire Indian sub-continent and Asia. These cities were vied by rural areas where Tregam gave birth to Kalhan and Khrew to Bilhana. If you trust the research of Mr. Lakshman Dhar and Bhan Daji, the world famous Kalidasa was also a Kashmiri born probably in Nunar village near Ganderbal. Regarding Kashmir's contribution to philosophy, it branched off into numerous schools, some of which were basically independent of the Vedas. "The monism of Trika Sasana associated with Vasugupta and Kattata," writes K.M. Panikkar, "is the noblest instance of the Adoita Vedanta influence on the religion... and is probably the earliest religious expression of Sankara's philosophical system".... Kashmiri Tantrism on Kaula Marga also takes on this monism, and combines the ancient forms of Devi worship with the philosophical tenets of Adoits".

K. M. Panikkar further affirms that the influence of Kaula form of worship is felt even now in every part of India. "It may well be claimed to be one of the major contributions of Kashmir to the life of India".

As for the Aryan religion, i.e Hinduism, it is quite probable that it continued changing and assimilating the local rituals and beliefs of Nagas, etc; till Neelsan's time when Moses reached Kashmir in the 13th century B.C. upto the 3rd century B.C. All that we gather from ancient records is that Kashmiri Hinduism was a symbol of adoration for non -Kashmiri Brahamins and Kashmir was regarded, according to Kalhana, "A Country where there was not a space as large as a grain of sesamum without a tirtha". Thus we find that the ancient lore in

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Kashmir has provided a hallo of sanctity round the valley, and non-Kashmiris in Consequence have shown deep devotion to the "Land of Parvati and Shiva, to the abode of Budhista Asthan, and to the Reshi Wari", even when our land was passing through long series of foreign cultures and Vandalic regimes, some which were rude enough to attempt the end of our individuality as a cultured – nation...

The two supplementary influencing agencies on Kashmir, one almost forgotten, and the other often overlooked by our historians, were the Jewish and the Budhistic followers who respectively began pouring into Kashmir round about 1275 B.C. and 300 B.C. The stray but recurring visits of Israelies to the Valley even upto the time of Alberuni are only recently investigated. We should not feel debased if we find numerous Kashmiri surnames such as Magray, Dand, Paray, Kar, Kara, Para, etc. traceable to Israeli group-leader's name. Hindus and Muslims in Kashmir either jointly share Hebrew surnames such as Hore, Raina, Kichlu, Haput, or retain them separately, i.e, Hindu Kash, Gadar, Warikm, Nehru, Bakru; and Muslim, Israeli, Shora, Gado, Lawey, etc; nor should we feel alarmed if almost all villages ending with "Bal" such as Mansbal, Ganderbal, Achabal, etc. are found to be the first abodes of Israeli settlers. Infact, there are numerous village such as Asham, Ajas, (Sonawari), Benham (Baramulla), Birsoo (Ganderbal), Gosham (Islamabad), Rehe (Kulgam), Mazar (Awantipora) retaining intact the same names of places that were frequent or inhabited by the jews before coming to Kashmir. If we probe deeper into our folk lore, customs, social tendencies and even legends we do, in addition to topography, confront Jewish impact on our culture. Neventheless, I shall leave this topic half-touched till the majority of writers and researchers digest the "discovery"....

We as Kashmiri feel proud to recall that the 3rd International Budhist Council was held in Kashmir near Harwan in the king Kanisha-

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ka's time. This Council gave a new shape to Mahatma Budha's message, and its proceedings changed the entire cultural outlook of the Central Asia, China, Tibet and Japan. The Council's final deliberations were inscribed on copper plates and preserved for a pretty long time, but were finally lost in the Vandalic upheavals that followed the Koshan rule in Kashmir. It has very recently been suggested that just about this period, one Vishnu Sharma of Kashmir wrote the world-famous *Raj Tantra,* first carried by Kashmiri Bikhshus to Iran, where it was translated into Pahlavi by Barzoya, and later into Arabic by Abdullah ibn Al-Muquaffa, we have only its Arabic translation *Kalila wa Dimna* now. Hieun Tsang in the 7th and On Kong in the 8th century had to admit the versatility of Kashmiri Budhists whose missionary Zeal and Scholarly erudition stood unparalled in the history of Budhism. Such great thinkers as Asva Ghosh Vasumitra, Sanghabhadra and Nag-Arjuna hailed from Kashmir. Translator of the *Malinda Panha* (Mr. Trenckner) says that this classic on Budhist Jurisprudence was written 12 yojnas from Kashmir, and in 1952 Shri Jia Lal Nazir tried to locate the place in Kishtwar. Suffice this to say that the Kashmiri Bhikshu Gonar Varma reached Java while preaching Budhism; Yahya Barmaki's grandfather was a Bhikshu from Kashmir who was raised to the sublime position of the Head Priest at Nau Vihara in Balkh city. He and his son Jafar became grand Vaziers to Haroon-Al-Rashid, and practically governed the Abbasid Empire stretching from Sindh in India to Tripoli in Africa. Shayam Bhatta, another Kashmiri Bhikshu Converted Tibet to Budhism, and gave the script to the Tibetian language that is still in vogue. It may be a pleasant surprise for many Kashmiris to note that the mother of the celebrated Zain-ul-Abidin, Badshah, was the daughter of the Raja of Obhindpora, a city of Gandhara District. Most probably she was a Budhist, because Gandhara was proselitised to Budhism in Ashoka's time, and it had become the nerve centre of Kashmiri missionaries from Koshan peri-

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od onwards. "Our earliest archealogical remains at Uskar" (modern Woshkur near Baramulla) ,writes Dr. Ray, "represent the culmination for Gandhara tradition whereas the art was a religious one centred round the cult of Sakya Prince"... the Turkuman caps and trousers of some of the Harwan figures are all reminiscent of the Central Asian tradition. But in assimilating non-Kashmiri designs, "we should not suppose our art to be wholly dependent on foreign pattern, it has its own local colour and poise." Vividly illustrated in the ruins of Martand temple, and in the uncared for Rajavihara, monastry and Stupa at Paraspor (Parihas-a-Pura). These exquisite pieces of our architechtural genius, left back more than a thousand years, speak for themselves what a Kashmiri engineer could design and build.

It was also a Budhist Raja, Renchan, who on accepting Islam became the first Muslim ruler of Kashmir under the name of Sultan Sadr-u-Din....

Before referring to what Islam gave to our culture, it may be pertinent to allude to some of the negative trends that have worsely shaped our ethical culture. It is a well established principle of anthropology that some unpleasant traits become permanent inhibitions in the collective unconscious of race-groups, and these are not eschewed despite a conscious dislike for them. Kashmiris could not prove an exception to the rule. Hence the Jewish love of money and intriguing polity; Budhist inertia and renunciation of the world—often sanctified by saintly orders and Aryan duplicity in character and cast-arrogance all have had their impact upon our social behaviour. In contrast to these sickly impulses, Israeli monotheism, Budhist Catholicism and Aryan pantheism have always been cherished by our intellectuals; and down from Abhinovagupta to Allama Iqbal, Kashmir has given a lead to the sub-continant in ethical culture. Our artistic ingenuity and aesthetic taste and our hospitality have very rare parallels in our neighbouring countries. It is because of the combined effect of world

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cultures on the positive side of our national personality that has given us the broad outlook on life as a whole. We as common citizens have very rarely lost our head in communal frenzy, and whenever a Jayapida, Harsha or Sikander from our own soil, or Mihargula, Zulchu or any other foreigner came to play with our convictions, it was only the local ruling clique that could exploit a particular group of common Kashmir. Our sense of nationhood was so deep-rooted that we resisted foreign domination for about 50 years, before Akbar by mere cunningness, conquered Kashmir in 1585 A.D. Let us take one example from the 14th Century history to illustrate, our sense of equilibrium when Rentchan Shah embraced Islam, there was no bloodshed on his conversion except that the majority community, i.e, Kahsmiri Pandits nicknamed the first Muslim Mohalla as Malechmar, the present Malchamar at Alikadal. Thus from the time Naga Arjuna propounded his Midhya Mika (the middle path) school, till Rentchan's conversion to Islam, a period of about 1200 years, Kashmiris tolerated intriguing irritation with a consoling remark Dunya Chhu Kawa Yeni Wolyai, i.e, "this world is only a fleeing show like a marriage ceremony of crows", a relic of Budhist Vignanward in our collective subconscious; and we cherished communal harmony at the most critical hour of communal or sectarian agitations. History bears witness to the fact that the opposing majority in Rentchan's time was won over by Muslim mystics especially of the Kubravi and Reshi orders within a century and with the change of faith, the Kashmiri nationhood was not thrown over board. Hindus accepted Muslim surnames such as Qazi, Razdan, Durani, Pir, Bamzai and Muslims retained Hindu surnames such as Koul, Pandit, Reshi and Bhat, etc. Numerous shrines were venerated by both communities because Kashmiris are psychologically introverts: at the altar of spiritualism a Muslim Pir and a Brahaman often agree, though they seldom allow their devotees to agree. This mutual affection is vividly visible in Persian poetry: when

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Hindu Poets are praising Islam; and in Kashmiri poetry when Muslim poets sing Shastras.

It will be no exaggeration to state that besides conservative priesthood, our mental culture is influenced by our chilly winters and despotic rulers as well. If the winter has provided ample leisure for our craftsmen to chisel his ingeniety, it has always been the main cause of our slump in trade, and has consequently forced the tradesman to be greedy in the sunny days with a view to deriving maximum benefit from the minimum store of merchandise. It is this poverty that made Kashmiri to pilfer away Hiuan Tsang's footwear from the Uskar Vihara (63/A.D). Our despotic rulers, especially from the day Kashmir lost its independence at the battle of Hirapore (1585 A.D.), have engendered in us a sense of inferiority-complex under the spell of which we even now disown our mother tongue, Kashmiri, leave alone studying in detail its rich literature dating back earlier to the first English poet, Chaucer. Lal Ded died months before Chaucer)...

Reverting to our historical background of culture, Kashmir is deeply indebted to Hazrat Mir Syed Ali Hamdani, and his spiritual successors, particularly the saints of Reshi order, who revolutionized our cultural values, and left such an everlasting impact upon our social behaviour that Kashmir became "Iran-e-Saghier" in all fine traits of culture. All that Iran was reputed for in mundane life such as in Wazawann, in shawl and carpet making, wood carving, papier machie, embroidery, stitch work and other useful arts, was transplanted to Kashmir with Iranian artisans, first on the initiative of Mir Syed Ali Hamdani and later by Badshah.

In this context we are led to creative and useful arts that are deemed to be part and parcel of a nation's culture, dancing, painting, sculpture, music and folk-lore upto the arrival of Hazrat-e-Amir. Dancing was a permanent profession in Kashmir, and according to Shri Var, one dancing girl in Badshah's time could express 49 emotions in her

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poses. In fact, the court dancer as reported by Kalhan often changed the course of history in pre-Islamic Kashmir. But Islam discouraged this luxury, and it remained confirmed to *Bhanda Bacha* or prostitutes called Hafiza only. Painting, though not discouraged in principle was replaced by more useful techniques such as *Khatati* (artistic scribing), designing in paper-machi, embroidery, carpet-making in which Kashmir excelled almost all schools except Iran itself. Sculpture for carving out images of gods was totally banned as being a source of idol-worship. But the artist was couched to make the best use of stone in architecture and it will be too boring for you, if I begin enumerating the architectural remains of Muslim period beginning from the Rentchan Shah's mosque in 1335 at Alikadal to the Hariparbat fort constructed in the last 3 years of Afghan rule (1817-19). Even when a number of magnificent monuments are in a dilapidated condition, the Tourist Department makes maximum capital of the architectural output of this period. Music has ever been encouraged by rulers and the common folk. Except for a brief spell in Sultan Sikendar's time, Muslims patronized music, imported Iranian and Indian instruments of music to enrich our local tradition, and Hassan Shah records that the Shahmiri Sultan Hassan Shah alone brought about 1200 music-experts from the neighbouring countries to Kashmir. Hence this is no jingoism to say that Kashmir has synthesized the musical theories and themes of Iran and India in a distinct harmonious school of its own.

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The Historians of Kamraz

1. Kalhan

On the Western side of Shadipora Sonawari, the historical remnants on the Parihaspora hillocks still remind passers by of the glory of the king Lalityadatya. The famous Kashmiri historian, Kalhana, was born in this city either in the last decade of eleventh century or the first decade of twelfth century.The Parihaspora city had been rendered to shambles by the incompetent followers of Lalityadatya before the birth of Kalhana. However, despite the literal decay of the architecture and the kingdom, knowledge production , particularly religious, was still going on. Parishapora has today Parray Pora to its Eastern side, Diwar Yakhwan Pora to its Western side and Trehgam to its North-Eastern side ,mourning on the past history and glory of this important city.

None of the past historians documented the life story of Kalhana formally. However, a contemporary poet of Kalhana by the name of Manakh pointed to the literary life of Kalhana saying that Kalhana had been deeply influenced by the poetry of Balhan and the *Mahabharta.*

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In the 19th century, whatever information has been gathered by M A Stein (1862-1943) and documented in the introductory part of *Raj Tarangni* is based on his readings of the said book and the internal evidences thereof. Such internal evidences collected by Stein are very helpful for us to understand the life of Kalhana. The present paper has been highly benefited by the information retrieved from his work.

The name of Kalhana's father was Champak, who was, during the king Harshman's period (1089-1101), an officer at the palace; was promoted to become the commander of the king's border police, and evolved to become a loyal minister of the king towards the end.When the king was brutally murdered, Champak was alongwith the prince, Bhoj, in some other area on the mission of suppressing a rebellion against the kingdom; otherwise,it was quite possible that he too might have been murdered with the king. Though Champak is nowhere mentioned after the murder of king Harash, yet, according to Gasha Lal Koul, he lived thirty years of life thereafter; and, according to Suyan, thirty five years. However, he lived an obscure life. His son did not look for a government job, and he himself did not look for any patronship; though, in 1120, the son of prince Bhoja did come to power for some months, and he himself was in good terms with many government officers of whom the chief government butler, Udhya, landlord king Adna, and the minister of the Raja Jay, Ralwan, were some prominent figures.

In *Raj Tarangni*, only one relative of Kalhana has been mentioned by the name of Kank, who was a famous musician of his times in Kashmir, and had migrated to Banaras consequent upon his growing hatred for civil war. He died in Banaras.

Childhood and Youth of Kalhana

The childhood and youth of Kalhan passed through that dark period of Kashmir history when Political instability and economic crisis

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ravaged Kashmir. It is assumed by historians that his father might have educated him at home; besides, as Parihaspora might have been the center of many researchers and men of letters, Kalhan might have learned from them also. Those were the times when every temple would have a school and a book shop adjacent to it. In addition to Parihaspora, Naran Bagh, Wangat Bali and Waskura were the other destinations of Brahmin scholars of that time, who he might have definitely benefited from. The study of *Raj Tarangni* provides an internal evidence to this effect that Kalhan had studied *Vikramank Dev Charat* of Balhan, the *Mahabharta*, the *Nilmat Puranas*, the *Harash Charat* and the *Ramayana.* Apart from these masterpieces, the internal evidences from *Raj Tarangni* also suggest that Kalhan might have studied literary productions of Hindi poets like Chandak (2/18), Yasuwarman (4/144), Damudargupt (4/494), and San Kaska (4/705). Poets of Raja Awanti Warman's period (883-885) like Malta Kun Sawa Saman, Anand Wardhan and Ratnakar (5/36); and, Hindi scholar of Sanskrit (of Grammar, Astrology and Wramana), Ramta (5/28-29) are the predecessors of Kalhana whom he must have studied, as, otherwise, he could not have mastered Sanskrit language and the system of its poetry. Stein has in this regard very clearly written that the discourse and stylistic analysis of the text of *Raj Tarangni* clearly shows the influence of all these scholars and poets.

Kashmiris spoke *Upbharmishi* variety of Kashmiri at the time of Kalhana. In fact, the word Kalhan has been derived from the word Prakrit Kalan, and Kalan is the distorted form of the Sanskrit word Kalyan which means someone who ecstatic and blessed. In fact, Kalhan has been a blessing for History as his pen could bring to life the thousand year's old history of Kashmir.

Buddhism prevailed to a good extent in Kashmir in the times of Kalhana. Common Brehmin, though, practiced Shivism yet, the fact of the matter is that the economic inequality among Hindus, class

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bias, political prostitution and casteism had totally dismembered the Hindu social structure and rendered it to a soulless entity, thereby forcing most of the Brehmins to convert to Budhism (Koul, Gasha Lal, 25), or to professed the belief that Budhism and Shivism were true religions. Kalhan's father worshipped Shivism and believed in the shrines of Nanda Khasheer, but his brother, Kank, was such a staunch follower and supporter of Budhism that he saved that statue of Mahatama Budh which stood fall in the Parihaspur Vihar since the period of Lalityadatya. It testifies to the fact that Kalhan's house hosted both the religions. Parihaspora had been since the days of Rajna Datya incompetent son of Lalta Datya, inclined towards decline; but it was still an important place of Budhism. By virtue of this environmental influence, Kalhan describes Mahatama Budh and Budhist saints in these words: "They are composers of all beings, the embodiment of perfect charity and nobility of feeling", a character that is not generally found in rulers.

Kashmir of Kalhana's Times

King Harsh was brutally murdered in 1101.Opportunist Brahmins, gluttonous viziers and rich people around the palace made Ouschal the new king. His father Malla had murdered Raja Harash. Ouschal and Sosal, two sons of Malla, were the cousins of Raja Harash. Ouschal had been trying hard to establish his position as a ruler, and with just ten years of rule at his back, a courtesan of Ruda or Chuda's name killed him. Ruda sat on the throne just for a day ;the other day, he was done away with by a landlord of Lar Pargang, Gagra Chandran. He got a stepbrother of Ouschal, Sahan,and placed him on the throne .It had been only four months for the rubber stamp king that the brother of Ouschal, Sula,dethroned and imprisoned him. Sula had to suppress dozens of rebellions from 1112 to 1120; even his brother-in-law, Gagar Chandar, had gone against him.Gagar

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Chandar and his three sons were hanged by Sula. In the meanwhile, Bhakaschar, the son of Raja Harash, matured up, and the Damar landlords coordinated with him. The civil war intensified and Sula had to run away for his life. Bhakaschar sat on the throne. He had had only a year on the throne as Sula attacked the kingdom and dethroned him.After eight years of constant battles with his old and new opponents, Sula finally decided to spare himself for war and put his son Jay Samha (Kalhan) or J Sanha (Gasha Lal) on the throne. Sula was finally killed in the same year, 1128.Half a dozen opponents stood up for the throne, when Jay Samha became the king. On the one hand ,Bhakaschar fought for the throne ;on the other hand, there was Bhowaj Dal Salha. There were many other people like Kata Jageerdar and Garha, etc., who were pinching the king. Jay Samha divided the opposition groups and made them fight each other in order to save his throne. However, when there would be some rest from all these rebellions, border areas like Rajouri and Gurez would boil up. In those days of absolute anarchy all around, there was actually no government machinery to maintain law and order and restore peace in Kashmir as poverty, violence, loot and robbery and oppression prevailed in all the corners of Kashmir. In the midst of this extremely unfavorable condition, with great scholarly detachment, Kalhan was compiling *Raj Tarangni* at Parihaspora, a document of thousands of years history in Sanskrit verses with only some favorable mention of the present king to avoid censorship as, otherwise, it would expose the follies of kings and kingdoms.

Raj Tarangni

Kalhan himself admits that apart from *Nilmat Purana* he had studied twelve such works that had historical material in them; nevertheless, none of those works is available now. Sorta was one of these twelve historians, whose writings were used by Kalhana; but, according

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to Kalhana, his work was so incoherent that it was very difficult to comprehend it. Only three of the remaining eleven historians have been mentioned in the *Raj*. Khismandarand's work, *Tarpawati*, is also referred to .There are no other sources ,historical documents or research works that Kalhan admits to have used for the writing of the *Raj*. What, however, one can very easily understand is the fact that he has used folk tales of Kashmir, decrees and dictates of kings, traditional stories, myths and old classical books available for the compilation of history in the verse form. A close reading of the *Raj* reveals that Kalhan has very finely blended mythology and reality. He collected data of events from the officials of the palace, like Manakh, for giving a detailed analysis of his own times.

The introduction part of *Raj Tarangni* was composed between 1448-49 (1070 Shaka year). Historians are of the opinion that complete *Raj Tarangni* was composed in 1450; however, I do not agree to it as it is quite possible that after the writing of the introduction part in 1448-49, he must have started filtering the materials and data for the production of *Raj Tarangni*, which obviously must have taken more than two years.

Kalhan begins the history of Kashmir from the times of Nandadal, who, according to Kalhan, became the king of Kashmir in 653 AD. Proffessor Dilsan shows his times somewhere before 1400 AD. According to Gasha Lal, he sat on the throne in 1710 BC. Even there are historians who say that he got on the throne twenty years before the battle of the *Mahabharata*. All these diverse and conflicting opinions confirm one thing that *Raj Tarangni* begins with a strong variation in historical data used by Kalhan. While talking about this variation and conflicting data, Kalhan himself admits the fact that some fifty two kings of the initial chapter of Kashmir history have not been located. He traced details about the first four kings from the *Nilmat Purana*; and according to Kalhan, thirty five kings from the Pandav

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Tribe are not traced anywhere. However, some two hundered and fifty years before Kalhan, a Pandit scholar ,Ratnakar ,had mentioned all these kings at the time of Raja Awanti Varman. Kalhan could probably locate the work of Ratnakar. Historian Balraj has mentioned eight of these kings; and, historian Chawlakar has mentioned only five. All these stories are actually based on traditional narratives about the kings, and Kalhan also kept them in the same way. Further, there is again a gap in data about the other kings maintained by Kalhan; thus, as the critics of *Raj Tarangni* have put it that the first three chapters of *Raj Tarangni* have many historically unauthentic data. Basically, the stories found in these three chapters are based on traditional narratives or simply folk tales or mythologies. These three chapters are about those times of our history that are considered the oldest by historians, when due to political revolutions and turmoil, records of entire ruling dynasties had gone waste (for example, rulers of Pandav dynasty); or, a Raja or two had been missed from records (for example, six Rajas before Raja Rana Ditya and the last Raja of his dynasty), the fact which forced Kalhan to consider Rana Ditya a ruler of three hundred years. There might have been two rulers of the same name in many ruling dynasties, which too might have caused confusion at various places. It is very difficult for a historian today to clear scientifically the confusion that existed in the history of thousands of years of those earliest times as it is difficult for us to collect the books of those times. However, such discords in the dates or name, and omission of some important names of the earliest period of Kashmir history can never be taken as the strongest reason for the unauthentic records in *Raj Tarangni*. Most of the critics of *Raj Tarangni* have admitted to this fact that the quantum of historical data collected in *Raj Tarangni* is far greater than any other Medieval book of history. Famous Sanskrit scholar, Keith, has gone to this extent of praise about *Raj Tarangni* that he prefers Kalhan to Levi, a world famous ancient

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historian. Basically, Kalhan pioneered the science of history for Kashmiris, and his principles of history writing allowed comparatively lesser competent historians also to have a name in the field. Following the footprints of Kalhan, Rajan, who covered Kashmir between 1151 AD and 1476AD, Shri Waran, who covered Kashmir between 1458 AD and 1486AD and Praja Bhat, etc. are some of the historians who continued the legacy. Though most of the critics of history do not find these historians equal or second to Kalhan, yet the fact is that these people dared to document the ups and downs of Kashmir history at a time when no Kashmiri Sanskrit scholar had the competence to do the same. Of the post-Kalhan series of *Raj Tarangnis* written by other historians mentioned above, Pandit Sri Kanth has of late edited three works of history. With the advent of Muslim period in Kashmir history, it was during Badshah's time that *Raj Tarangni* was first translated into Persian language by Mulla Ahmad Kashmiri. P N K Bamzai is of the opinion that the translation of Mulla Ahmad Kashmiri was perhaps incomplete, that is why the Mughal emperor, Akbar, assigned the job of its complete Persian translation to Mulla Abdul Qadir Badayuni. It is also said that Mulla Qadir translated in to Persian *Raj Tarangnis* written after Kalhan, thereby adding to the legacy of Mulla Ahmad Kashmiri. These Persian translations helped those historians who did not have a good knowledge of Sanskrit. Malik Hyder of Chadoora specially benefited from these works for his 1617 AD Persian work of Kashmir history, wherein like Kalhan, he begins the story of Kashmir from the pre-historic period.

With the unfortunate loss of Persian translation of *Raj Tarangni,* this monumental work of history remained helter skelter in some Pandit houses of Kashmir. A Stein worked very hard on the subject, and with the help of Pandit Suraj, he could discover a copy of the same with the three sons of Akhshuramanian. This copy of *Raj Tarangni* had been written by hand by Ratna Kanth in 1685 AD. Stein

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compared the text of this manuscript with the text of other manuscripts and made some correction, wherever required (particularly the eighth section of the work where for reasons unknown Kalhan could not make necessary editing /corrections in the text). Stein translated the work verse by verse and wrote a detailed commentary of the text also, besides providing a detailed discussion on important themes of the work in its introduction. Stein published his translation of *Raj Tarangni* in 1900 AD.R S Pandit published his translation of *Raj Tarangni* by the name *Saga of the Kings* in 1935 AD.

The impact of bloody history recorded by Kalhan is quite evident in his beliefs about the world, and the same impact could be easily traced in the beliefs of those historians who followed Kalhan in the tradition of history writing. Most of the historians of Kashmir are religious in spirit, preachers of morality and fatalists in their world view. They preach morality wherever they get a context, and consider the world a place of tragedies and a laboratory of unseen demons. They all believe that man in this labortary somehow manages to pass through the fire of tests successfully or unsuccessfully for his final destination in some other world. *Raj Tarangni* records such beliefs of its writer:

"Fortunes are the passing flashes of lightening from the cloud of fate, and exceptional greatness finds a more disgusting end. Notwithstanding this, the pride of imaginary greatness does not cease in those whose souls are struck with delusion" (*Rajtarangni*: v11/1729).

As a historian, Kalhan would consider those historians alone gentlemen who would write the stories of people without any bias towards anybody:

"That noble minded (poet) alone is worthy of praise whose word, like that of a judge, keeps thee from Love and hatred in relation to the facts of the past."(Ibid)

Nevertheless, I find just one big contradiction in the conduct of Kalhan as a historian or a visionary scholar of Kashmir: If he was a

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spiritualist, on the one hand, why is it that he almost worshipped kings on the other hand? He would argue that Kashmir could not be conquered by outsiders by virtue of their material power and weaponry, except spiritual power as it is the land of Parvatis and Shiva, but contradicts himself by saying that wise men of the land should never oppose the king no matter what their character is. The impact of such interpretations of politics and world view has continued to shape the minds of Kashmiris till date as Kashmiris hold in high esteem those who manage to destroy the chastity of its independent crowns.

2. Hasan (1833-1898)

Hasan Shah was born at the Gamru village of Bandipora at a time when Kashmir was being eaten up by the famine of Sheir Singh. Kashmir had been under the siege of a fatal famine for three years from 1833 AD. It is estimated that around seventy percent of the village population perished in these three years due to hunger. The Shahs migrated to Gamru Bandipora in this very unfortunate period. Pandit Ganesh Koul Datatar was one of their forefathers who first embraced Islam at the hands of Sheikh Hamza Makhdoom (RA), and was renamed Gazi ud Din. The Shahs inherited knowledge from their forefathers and transferred the same from generation to generation. Sheikh Mohammad Fazil, one of the progenies of Gazi ud Din, was known for his wisdom, knowledge and nobility of status among the learned. His progeny was later on known as Fazilis. He passed away in 1150 AD.

Hasan Shah's father, Gh Rasool Sheva, was a great scholar of Persian and Arabic literatures and a poet also. The credit of Hasan's scholarship goes to his father, simply because, during the Sikh period of Kashmir history, there were no Madrasas in Kashmir; and if there was any teacher in villages, he was not without problems of his own. Some information about his early life has now been collected by

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scholars, and Shah himself gives a detailed account of his ancestors in his book *Aijaz e Gareeba.* Professor Hasan Shah has given some biographical account of Hasan in the introductory part of volume two of his Urdu translation of *Tareekh e Hasan.* The Jammu and Kashmir Art and Cultural Academy has also discovered some information about Hasan and published it in *Sheeraza* in 1971 in the backdrop of the construction of his grave. The Gamur village was never aware of the heights that Hasan had scaled in knowledge, wisdom and art, that is why probably his grave was lying unattended.

When a vizier of Dogra rulers by the name of Pannu devastated Kashmir by his oppression, Hasan Shah committed the same to paper filled with such pain and agony that upon hearing the same the Maharaja immediately suspended the vizier. Ranbir Singh even changed his attitude towards the Kashmiri people. Hasan Shah's painful writing made him famous in the Dogra court. The prime minister of the period assigned him the work of writing the Geography of Kashmir, which is the first volume of *Tareekh e Hasan.*

Lawrence used the services of Hasan during the settlement of Kashmir. Upon the recommendations of Lawrence, he was given a big plot of land at Lar, which is still in the possession of his heirs. While writing the history of Kashmir, Hasan did not give up his spiritual practices. He had a strong spiritual attachment with Sheikh Hamza Makhdoomi for his *Suharwardi* connections. He had made Khawaja Mohammad Tashqandi his spiritual guide in the last days of his life, whose love had attracted him towards Persian and Kashmiri poetry. His *Aijaz e Gareeba* is apparently a book on the miracles of the Prophet (SAW), but it is also a masterpiece of Kashmiri poetry. Similarly, his *Gulistan e Akhlaq* is a masterpiece of Persian poetry. Besides these works, Hasan has written *Khareet e Asrar* which is highly praised by *Peers* in Kashmir because it caters to their needs and the needs of their followers.

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However, the work that made him everlasting is his *Tareekh e Hasan*, which is originally written in Persian, and has a far higher status in comparison with other works of History in Persian language. Hasan passed away just three years after the completion of this work. This monumental work was completed by Hasan in three volumes.

Volume 1

The subject matter of this part is the Geography of Kashmir. The distinguishing feature of this part of the book is that Hasan composed the geographical details of Kashmir after his inch by inch survey of Kashmir, reason being scholars before him had not left behind any valuable material on the subject except about those places that had become important in the Muslim period. Scholars have written much about such places. However ,important places of the Hindu period were still shrouded in obscurity, and, therefore, Hasan wrote a letter to the prime minister, Deewan Kripa Ram, requesting him for deputing a Pandit scholar with him who could help him in discovering the historical background of the holy places and shrines of Hindus. The study of this volume reveals that Hasan had acquired the geographical knowledge of all such important places. He has given a detailed list of all those sources that he used in the composition of this volume, of which there are some English books also:1) *Geography of the World, and 2) Northern Barriers of India* by JN Dyen.

I don't know whether Hasan studied these English works by himself or requested somebody to read them for him for the necessary information. Since Hasan did not know Sanskrit, he, therefore, ignored talking about reasons behind names of different places in Kashmir. However, his contemporary English writer, A Stein, fulfilled this job in his book *Geography of Ancient Kashmir*, who talks in detail about different place names in Kashmir and the reasons thereof. This particular volume of the book is not only a scholarly work on the

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geography of Kashmir, but it is also a work on the culture and the history of Kashmir.

Volume 2

This volume of *Tareekh e Hasan* is on the political conditions of Kashmir, and it could be argued that for the compilation of this volume, Hasan might have fully or partially studied the following works:

1. *Waqaya Kashmir* by Mulla Ahmad Kashmiri; 2. *Tareek e Kashmir* by Haidar Malik Chadoora; 3. *Tareekh* by Hidayatullah Mattoo; 4.*Nizam ul Waqaya*; 5. *Bag e Sulaiman* by Mir Sad Ullah Shahaabadi; 6. *Wajeez u Tareekh* by Mulla Abdul Gani; 7. *Gulzar e Kashmir* by *Deewan Kriparam*; 8.*Gulab Nama* by Kripa Ram; 9.*Muntakhab u Tawareekh* by Narayan Koul Aajiz; 10. *Majmua Tawareekh* by Sairbal Kachroo; 11.*Taeekh Rasheedi* by Mirza Haidar Doglat; 12.*Guldasta Kashmir* by Hargopal Khasta; and, 13.*Waqaat Kashmiri* by Khawaja Deeda Mari.

Apart from these works of history, he has studied partially these works also:

1. *Baharistan e Shahi*; 2. *Lubb u Tawareekh* by Baha ud Din; 3.*Tareekh e Hadi*; 4.*Tareek e Firishta*.

It is believed that he might have used some other books also for the purpose. The most important of these all sources is that part of *Waqaya Kashmir*, which no historian from Kalhan to Hasan Shah had sighted .It is said that when during the reign of Badshah, Mullah Ahmad wrote *Waqaya Kashmir*, he made a mention of those Rajas also who had not been mentioned in *Raj Tarangni*. In order to justify the omission of thirty five such Rajas from *Rajtarangni*, Kalhan stretched three periods of government of that time upto three hundred years .Just as Kalhan could not have sighted *Ratnakar Pran*, the historians of Kashmir after the period of Badshah had not been able

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to locate *Waqaya Kashmir*. It is said that Hasan Shah had gone to the Panjab with his spiritual master, where he had the chance to meet Mulla Mahmud in the Pindoori village of today's Western Pakistan. Mulla Mahmood had a copy of *Waqaya Kashmir* which had details of Rajas of Ratnakar Pran. Hasan copied the details and mentioned them in his history of Kashmir. Historically speaking, this was an important information collected by Shah as it, for the first time from Kalhan, helped Kashmiri historians to come up with a coherent work of history. Hasan, unfortunately, after recording the information, lost the copied material of *Waqaya* while travelling on a horse on way to Lar, and could never find it. Following are the Rajas that Kalan could not mention in *Raj Tarangni,* and Hasan discovered them in his book on Kashmir history:

1. Thirty Five Rajs after the fourth Raja in *Raj Tarangni* (From Hiran Dev or Bhagwant);
2. Those six Rajas (Taunjeen, Sarab Seen, Ghandhar Seen, Lachman, Saway and Wijradatya) who ruled Kashmir before Raja Ditya from 191 AD to 414 AD;
3. Raja Dinay Ditya who, after Rana Ditaya, ruled from 474 AD to 521 AD.

Apart from having the distinction of mentioning these lost Rajas in his history, Hasan's history is better than other works of history on Kashmir in the art of history writing also. However ,this important feature of Hasan's work demands a separate book for research.

Volume Third: *Asrar ul Akhyar*

This particular part of his book has been translated into Urdu as *Tareekh e Awliya e Kashmir,* published by Noor Mohammad of Srinagar. It talks about the life history of the saints and seers of Kashmir. It is divided in five sections: section one focuses on Syeds and *Sadats*

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of Kashmir; section two talks about the saints and seers of Kashmir; section three talks about Islamic scholars of Kashmir; section four about revivalists of Kashmir, and section five about relics, etc. of the saints and seers. The Peer dynasties had the relevant source material for all; besides, after studying this part of the book, Hasan seems to have studied the following works:

1. *Shahnama Tawfeeq Washaiq;* 2. *Panjnama Masnawi;* 3. *Asrar ul Abrar* by Baba Dawwood Mishkwati; 4. *Futoohat e Kubrawi* by Ab Wahab Noori; 5. *Futoohat e Qadriya* by Mir Mohammad Husain Qadri; 6. *Dustoor Us salikeen* by Baba Dawood Khaki; 7. *Khawariq us salikeen* by Ahmad bin Saboor; 8. *Khamsa* by Bahud Din Matoo; 9. *Waqaat e Kashmir* by Khawaja Mohammad Azam Deeda; 10. *Majmua Shaida*, and 11. *Rishinama.*

The second and third volumes of the book are really such treasures of knowledge about Kashmir history which have no second in sight,though Kashmiris have always been keener to document their spiritual experiences.

Volume Fourth

This is the smallest volume in size, and Hasan seems to have been a bit casual in this particular part of the book. It talks about the poets of Kashmir. While doing his research on poets of Kashmir, he seems to have been concerned about Persian poets only. That fact of the matter is that Hasan could have developed a full length volume on the Pre-Islamic Sanskrit Poetry of Kashmir and Post-Islamic Kashmiri poetry in Kashmir;nevertheless, Hasan could not avoid being selective in this case as:

1.There was no pioneering work on the Sanskrit and Kashmiri poetry of Kashmir which could have inspired him to do justice to the subject, or could have served as his source;

2. He had already consumed his blood on the first three volumes

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of the book and was quite exhausted due to hardwork and predominant old age;

3. He was a scholar of Persian language, and, obviously, could not have directly accessed the texts of Sanskrit poetry. Similarly, even though his times were the golden period of Kashmiri poetry, yet the lovers of Kashmiri literature were few and far between. However, ,since Persian was the official language of Kashmir upto 1885 AD, that means by the time Hasan had turned fifty five years old, Persian was the official language of Kashmir; therefore, the inclination of Hasan towards documenting contributions of Kashmiri poets in Persian language is natural. In the year 1885, Urdu and English replaced Persian,and Kashmiri language was further ignored by scholars, commentators and the government, of course. These could be some of the reasons behind the non-availability of a scholarly work on the literature of Kashmir in the fouth volume of Hasan's work on Kashmir. This volume is spread on fifty six pages only, and it very briefly touches on the samples of Persian poetry beginning from the Chak Period upto 1891 AD.

Before his death, Hasan had himself completed the handwritten manuscript of the *Tareekh*, which he, with his personal seal on the book, presented to the shrine of Hazrat Ameer e Kabir at Khanqah e Mualla, Srinagar as a kind of offering. It was published after Sheikh Abdullah took over as the prime minister of Kashmir and the book was edited by the Department of Research. The second volume has been translated into Urdu by Molvi Mohammad Ibrahim, and third and forth volumes have been published in Urdu by Noor Mohammad Book Sellers without the name of the translator. With the publication of Hasan's *Tareekh*, the eyes of those Kashmiri scholars got opened, who, in their academic life, had never thought of reading about the glorious history of Kashmir. This book of Kashmir history is an encyclopedia of information about the Kashmir history, and one

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fails to understand how a man living in a far flung village of Kashmir could manage collection of such information and then its compilation as a voluminous book of Kashmir history; in fact, as those were the times when, on the one hand, Dogra oppression had broken the bones of Kashmiri people and,on the other hand, Nature too was not favourable to the conditions of the wretched Kashmiris. Hasan always felt for the wretched condition of Kashmiri people who had been dehumanized and infantilized by the Dogra oppression as could be understood by this quatrain:

Wullaras Manz Cham Yerawani Nawo
Buthi aaw Viji hund Wawo ho
Ham Chumna Athay Nam katho thawo
Yawnas wanta Meeni Grawoho

Hasan passed away in 1898 AD, and ten years before his death, he had written his own date of death through the following Persian verses:

Ah Ghulam e Hasan Bulbulay Bagh e Sukhan
Raft azeen khush chaman janebay menu naku
Hatifay farkhanda hal az payay tareekh e sal
Omar wa Wiladat wisal guft za yak bait jo
Bulbul e bagh e asfiya aamad wa sajid bar leist
Az payay sal e wafat yaft Hasan bihisht go

He is buried at the Gamru Village of Bandipora. In 1971, the Art and Cultural Academy of Kashmir made a magnificent repair work on his grave.

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3. Wahab Parray

Name Wahab son of Maqsood son of Aaali son of Bulla son of Musa son of Hussain. He was born on August 7, 1846, and passed away on Decmber 29, 1914.

List of his Creative Works

1. *Haft Qisa e Aama* 2. *Haft Qisa e Makirzan* 3. *Chahar Darwesh* 4. *Gulbadan* 5. *Bahramgo* 6. *Akbarnama* 7. *Shahnama* 8. *Khilafatnama* 9. *Saylabnama* 10. *Shakl wa Shamail Aanhazrat* 11. *Sultani* 12.*Durweshi* 13. *Deewan i Wahab.*

Of all these works, *Akbarnama*, *Shahnama*, *Khilafatnama*, *Sultani* and *Durweshi* are the works of history of different countries and people in verse form in Kashmiri language.

Life History of Wahab

Wahab was born just five months after the infamous Amritsar Treaty. This was, of course, the darkest period of Kashmir history. He was just two and half year old when his father, Maqsood Parray, passed away. His mother was a brave heart. She, despite all odds, admitted him to a local school, called *Maktaba*, and he finished the traditional Persian syllabus in seventeen to eighteen years. What was his mastery of Persian Language like, this question is better answered by his creative translation of Persian poetry into Kashmiri language? Through *Akbarnama*, *Shahnama* and *Sultani* alone, Wahab added some thirty six thousand verses to our Kashmiri literature. One really wonders to see the bulk of work that Wahab has produced despite all the mundane engagements that he had. What is more surprising to see is the fact that he translated the rarest of Persian masterpieces into Kashmiri, documented the history of Kashmir, Iran and Afghanistan in the verse form and wrote some of the best collections of Kashmiri poetry de-

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spite all the mundane engagements that he had as a government employee and a responsible village head. From twentieth year of his age to sixty fifth year, for about forty five years, he composed around one thousand verses in a year, of which the major portion was historical in nature. The sources of his life history are the following works:

1. *Daily Journal of Wahab* (in Persian Prose);
2. The oral account of his life from those people who were the contemporaries of Wahab, and I have made notes of those accounts since 1935;
3. Such verses of Wahab that he has written in different works about his own life.

Even though five of Wahab's initial works are missing, yet whatever is available to us in the written form is of such a great value that it would require a separate book for elaborating his discourses. In his professional and mundane affairs, Wahab was the busiest person as he had from time to time been all the "*Dars*"- A *Halqa Dar* in the revenue department; *Zaldar* and *Naib Tehsildar*; in leisure time, a *Kardar*, *Tehvildar* and *Thekadar*, and at social level a *Chakdar* and *Sarmayadar* (Capitalist). It was only in the last six or seven years that Wahab took a leave from the mundane affairs of life depended for his livelihood on the income generated from his land while devoting all his time to prayers and spiritual engagements.

His first work is basically about the history of Afghanistan, and is the sweetest Kashmiri rendering of Hameedullah Islamabadi's Persian *Akbarnama.* Written in total number of 2341 verses, it is about the wars between the Pathans and the English, and the wars between the Sikhs and the Pathans which were fought between 1833 and 1845. The hero of this epic story is Akbar Khan son of Amir Dost Mohammad. Wahab has composed an addenda to the main epic wherein he has documented the life history of his contemporary Afghan ruler upto 1879, and has also mentioned the invasion of Sikhs and the

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decline of Afghan rule. Wahab has included his own observations at many places in the epic, particularly in the opening pages while composing the defeat of Afghan governor at the hands of Sikh army. Wahab talks about this war in these verses:

Wudan aayi tima az rahi Shopian
Baja Neek pura barikh koh ta wan
Sapun shor gow topa khana khalas
Sapun tras kohan bakashmir das
Yuthai watch Jabar khanas khabar
Sikaw mulki Kashmir kor mokhtasar
Kodun phoji afghan ba paikar I band
Ruhli hew pakan buni hew qad buland
Muqabal timayi gayi bamaidan sikan
Bafarmud aan shahi lashkar shikan
Badanam ki fath sikan maishuwad
Zama mulk Kashmir yaksu shuwad
Wanith yi kurun hamla yakbargi
Karan paani panas su aawargi
Ba tundi gundukh topakhana sikaw
Wuthith barhawa foje afghan gaw
Zimaidan chalith aaw jabbar khan
Sapu behimath baikas wa natawan
Khasith teenayi draw shahrai nebar
Su taizni safakadla beethas pathar
Dekas chand dichan aas darpesh hal
Pathrowth zimadi rotund um ta yal
Dopun harkasay bakht yari kunand
Ki shair wa falak ajz wa zari kunand
Shuwad harkasay bakht badkaj rawish
Zi shamat shuwad asp tazi kharash

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Bakashti choluyi toba toba karan
Achaw khun tas chali chali haran (Akbarnama)

The Sikh rule ended in 1846, the same year when Wahab was born. Hamidullah Islamabadi had written *Akbarnama* in 1844, and was translated into Kashmiri by Wahab around thirty five years after that.

Shahnama

Shahnama of Firdousi is basically the fictional history of Iran, which is replete with the characteristics of an epic than a work of history. However, its characters are all historical to the eyes of Iranian nationalists and monarchists, even though they believe that Rustam lived for more than nine hundred years. Wahab burned midnight oil for nine years in the pursuit of composing a Kashmiri translation of around fifty five thousand verses of the original *Shahnama (*and eleven more for writing a critical response to it in the form of *Khilafatnama*), an achievement which was recognized in Iran by placing the original photograph of Wahab beside the imaginary photograph of Firdousi in the royal library of Iran. Of the four parts of *Shahnama* in Kashmiri ,Noor Mohammad of Srinagar has published only one volume somehow. Some details of the four parts of Kashmiri *Shahnama* are given as follows: Volume One has Seven Thousand and Thirteen Verses; Volume Two has Five Thousand One Hundred Six Verses; Volume Three has Four Thousand Seven Hundred and Six verses; and Volume Four has Six Thousand Six Hundred and Sixty Six verses. Total number of verses in all the four volumes of the Kashmiri *Shahnama* is Twenty Three Thousand Four Hundred and Ninety One verses. Of the Six Thousand Six Hundred and Sixty Six verses of the forth volume of this work, only two thousand four hundred and eighty four verses belong to Firdousi whileas rest of the four thousand

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one hundred and eighty two verses are the original composition of Wahab about the history of Islam in Iran wherein he has shown how during the period of second rightly guided Caliph of Islam, Omar (RA), Saad bin Waqas conquered Iran. This part of *Shahnama* has been titled *Khilafatnama*. Before composing this epic history of Islam, Wahab collected materials for seventeen years. In this volume, fact and fiction have been very clearly shown apart from each other as there are no mythological characters like Rustam and Kay Khusraw in the *Kihilafatnama*.It is a marvelous document on the history of Islam. Wahab was fifty five years old when he completed this project on the history of Islam in verse form. Some verses from *Khilafatnama* are presented here for the consideration of Historians:

The Last King of Iran

Babazi sapun shah darshashdara
Diwan chrang khanas andar kya karah
Sipah dushmanan roba thawis tayar
Barabar shash wa panj drasa ta char
Kalas peth wuchun yam sahlab aaw
Phuteth tem barabar ganzari gaz ta paw
Razay peth pathrowuth kokar shal zan
Bakhawari su pati kini dulan bal zan
Narew ta zangw suyi pakan dur chol
Qazaan pukur shahmatan pur wol
Shkistan temis zilatan aql maar
Qazaan nakh hownas grata paar
Gatay manza yamat wuchun suyi shah
Sapun wara aagah su az ruyi shah
Kalas ous taban tamis taji zar
Tamahhan dopus waqt chi kom kar
Payay keena hirsan korus iztirab
Chu rut taj marun karun garaq aab

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Korus zor nafsan bayees khun har
Khodayan loduyi garah pannuyi shikar
Baikhlas shahas mathar log tami
Babazi tamis khunsayi zog tami
Saray khawabi gaflat korun bay khabar
Bayak zarb channas kadith magzi sar (Shahnama)

Sultani

This is basically a work on the life of Sheikh Hamza Makhdoomi (RA), unparalled, of course, in our literature. The Caliphs of Sheikh Hamza (RA) had written five works in Persian on the life of this great saint. They are: *Hidayat ul Mukhliseen* by Mir Baba Haidar; *Tazkirat ul Murshideen* by Khawaja Meeram; *Rahat ut Talibeen* by Khawaja Alhasan Qari; *Juljatul Aarifeen* by Khawaja Ishaq Qari, and *Sultani* by Sheikh Ahmad Chogli. The summary of all these five works had been produced in Persian verse by Bahaud Din, but, Wahab went ahead and produced the summary of all the six works in Kashmiri verse in his work, *Sultani.* He completed this monumental work in five years by writing 11753 verses which include the Kashmiri verse translation of *Wirdul Mureedeen* of Bahaud Din Khaki. Though *Sultani* revolves around the life of Sheikh Hamza and his Caliphs, yet, the fact is that the book also touches those important socio-political facts of the Chak period that historians have hardly mentioned in their works. A part of this work has been published by Noor Mohammad of Srinagar in three volumes, though without any organization. If someday this voluminous work is published after proper editing ,it would definitely unravel many political, social and historical dimensions of Kashmir.

Sahlabnama

When Wahab was composing the translation of *Sultani* in Kash-

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miri verse ,the 1860 deluge struck the valley of Kashmir leaving behind the tragedies of high magnitude. Sonawari area was among the worst hit areas of Kashmir. Wahab has captured in this epic the stories of destruction and devastation caused by the deluge. This epic is a historical document in the sense that all the important events related with the deluge have been presented by the author, and perhaps no other author on the subject has presented them in their writings as done by Wahab.

Darweshi

The title of this work should not mislead the reader that it is a work on the life of saints and seers, though a small fragment of the book does talk about those saints and seers whom Wahab consulted and met regarding spiritual guidance. Basically, this work is a complete document on the social history of Wahab's time. Wahab in this work comments on the deeds of all those capitalists, poets, scholars, Hajis and other people whom he had seen and had had different experiences with. It in fact sounds like a travelogue in this sense. However, this work of Wahab does actually give us the glimpses of the Kashmir history from 1856 to 1908, which Wahab had been himself an eyewitness to during the Dogra period. It is, therefore, a complete document on the social history of Kashmir of the times mentioned above. Some of the verses from *Darweshi* are presented here for the consideration of historians:

Ous basheth ta satath andar zaman hijri sana
Dar nazar halat e dunya yad chim sari tana
Sana shethas tam zulma ous garat bayhisab
Kamawith dyun hardoh hisa karobaigaruk azab
Sarisayi wariyas sazawul bayi shaqdar kardar
Aasi kheth cheth greestani jans karan tema lar lar
Thani kokar bayi yeer prath fasluk hisa shaqdar sayi

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Bayi naqdi rasam dar har khana tasa baychara sayi
Hardo hisa nith pata tasa aasi aasan mabadar
Ous bali ki nina rostayi baqiyas tafseel war
Kasiban prath tayifas kormut muqarar baji sal
Ous lutuk mahkama bod naw thath naqdi mahal
Chan watal wani kaandar puj ta dander bayi khar
Aasi sari tayifa yema chi ta tima tima bajdar
Mokdam wa shaqdar sazawul dumb watul chankhar
Aasi darith huni zan mordar sayi woomaidwar
Ous khalqan hisa tul ta lisa ala bayi haak hand
Reta kaalis ous tahweeldar hakim anda wand
Ous wariyas kamawith diyun pushi aasan lonwani
Kathkokur chadar tad ah wuh naqd rishwa gew thani

(from *Darweshi)*

People would not want to do peasantry because they knew that upon the harvest it would all go to the hands of government officials. For the salary of the government officials, *Mangayi* (a kind of tax) would be collected from peasants by force. Peasans would be canned by these officials of the Dogra Raj for not tilling the land and then harvesting it. It was all the way a period of complete dehumanization for the Kashmiri people. Wahab comments on these conditions in these words:

Sunta ta Harda bahar sow ous aasan geerodar
Aasi nayran bahri aabadi sipah tayi ahli kar
Lori zora who nawan wayinawan aasi dand
Ous sahlabs masawi son wagon ta khor ta shand
Nawaabadi magar tima aasi warani karan
Heela kari kari aasi nayran luth ta garath karan

(*Darweshi*)

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Different Departments

A: Revenue Department

Aasi hay yus yath alaqas ahlikara kardar
Ous bartaraj mordum tas bakuli ikhtiyar
Kharach tamisund that alaqas barigiran ous faraz
Waqta waqta nakha walun ranga ranga ous qarz

Military Department

Gasa lonanas ta taweela chomunas baigar ous
Mufi Barsar paknawun zaliman hund bar ous
Wati pakawun aasihay yudwai siyah nakardagar
Watihay yath jayi khalqan karihay bali laralar
Darzamistan wuh trok gasa aman sarbar aasi
Gasa ratnas peth diwan tahlen burishwat diyar aasi
Baagrith aasikh tawaila mati khasaposhi Karin
Beyi darogan ta tahlen kun chateh mulkas barin

Tourism Department

Yud yiwan kahn ous dar Kashmir hinda baharsar
Pas jahanam ous manasbal nishat wa shalamar
Ous aasan raz ta gaz taraj khalqan margand
Branjbarah gew ta kath ziyun gasa dodh ta dar dand
Taza thani murgay jawan mada mahin sar taza thool
Hara dith aasi karnawan zar ha kari kari qabool
Gah manasbal ta sumbal gah shadipur ous
Rath tad oh ranga ranga sakht aasan shor ous

Forest Department

Yali begari aas mulkas harda aasan darogeer
Bod saza bar ahli bangil ous hajin banayeer

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Industry Department

Shalbafas baj shayatrah ropya dina ayeen sal
Ous that waqtas juda hukma mahal e dag shal
Ada az qanoon british go timan moqoof baj
Warya zalim sapani az hukmi hakim la ilaj

General Oppression

Temi waqtaki zulm kateh aana bo andar shumar
Bata hakim aasi keuth kya ous mulkas gatakar
Roz wa shab thani gew ta kath zeun ta kokar beyey sheerkham
Ous dar harja prayan kich su lootuk intizam

About the Conditions of People

Pachi rostuyi ous har kansi munul aasan phirun
Ous koshur poch bazay afsaran bakhtawaran
Akh za zani yudh aasahan gamas andar dastar wali
Mulay ousukh pheran ta Munnali beyi jama nail
Aasa munaji topi aasan kya ajayab fatili dar
Chith kadnas ousna kehn that zamanas eitibar
Noshi kori ous qirmizi qasaba year koyee
Kasiban nishi ous aasan tola kani ada sair koiyi
Greesi bayi aas qirmazi ranga aasan hanga dajia
Seroz na panch gaz meenith barabar paw khaji
Sawnen aasan rakhal tanta qirmizi ranga pot
Grees bayan ropa mokhta nata aasan ladre hout
Tathat zamanas manz morawaj ous na kehn roph soun
Aath dah ropyay zananay ous zewar heri bon
Aasi lagan kacha bangray nata sartal ziyada tar
Sonra akh patnuk bo sartalay hund karigar
Ous na israf khordnosh asbab wa libas

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Nay sharab wa chai qahwa bang charas tay chroth ta nas
Nay dabal chot zanahan nay cake nay biskot aasi
Nay globand na patlun tay na kot wa boot aasi
That zamanas ous khalis noon darmasraf bakar
Kahnsi trakh kahnssay za trakh ta kahnsay bah ya kahnsay khar
Gama wanen aas kashir nas bayey kehn noon teel
Ziyada kam saban tamok zard chob wa zanjabeel

In short, Wahab has in *Daurweshi* versified all those oppressions of the Dogra Raj which lay bare before us the socio-economic and political conditions of the end of nineteenth century. Such a social document in the verse form is of course a valuable treasure in our Kashmiri literature.

Wahab had learnt from the study of history that this world is a cheat market where emperors lose their kingdoms, empires suffer from nothingness and brave young men are buried under the soil. Such a belief has been expressed by Wahab even in his *Deewan* at many places. *Deewan e Wahab*, in this way, does also contribute to the study of history as the results drawn from history have been versified by Wahab thus:

Hato nadana chuy bazi ya kartoot
Achan tal chuy chey zahir takht o taboot
Karan chuk yath zameenas peth cha shokhi
Ya nengli doh akay chey te soboot
Ganeemat chuy ganeemat wunikenuk dam
Ya dam rozi na woni muddat chuna teuth
Yi sumbrak chuy wujaras kich su jaded
Yi kharchak khalisan lilah chay ti neuth
Cha panney ath kar sarmaya burbad
Yusay yati gich harith ta tami jut

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This star of our history and literature set on December 29, 1914 at Khosa Mohalla Hajin, and lies buried at the same place.May Allah bless him with *Jannat*!

4. Mohammad Din Fouq

(Hardshiwa Zenageer)

There are many villages in Kashmir where during the initial years of the Dogra oppression and the oppression of Pathans people migrated to different places of India for the safety of their lives. In the families of such migrants were born great scholars, poets, politicians and artists whose detailed biographies are yet to be researched. Of such migrants, one Miyan Hasan Shah Dar lived at Hardshewah village during the Pathan period. He left Kashmir probably in 1816, and reached Ghadtal village of Siyalkot of Pakistan. Kashmir was then engulfed by the civil war of Pathans, and there was anarchy all around. Miyan Hasan Dar continued his love for knowledge in the Punjab, which earned his son Munshi Rajab Ali Dar the post of Mir Munshi in the Sikh army. Rajab Ali Dar was also called by the name of Rajab Dar. He had three sons: 1.Budha Khan (Mushtaq); 2.Molvi Ludha Khan (Zar), and Ghulam Mohammad Khadim. Molvi Ludha Khan worked on a good post at Ponch, and Mohammad Din Fouq was his son. Ghulam Mohammad Khadim came back to Hardshewa and his progeny still lives there.

Late Ali Mohammad Khan has mentioned the year of birth of Fouq as 1887 in the *Sheeraza* journal, which, however, should be 1877, an opinion seconded by Anwar Ahmad Khan in 1973 (*Shreeza*, April 1973). I have benefitted a lot from these two papers. Fouq was born at Harnarayan village which is in the South of Siyalkot, just three kilometers away. Fouq passed the Middle School Examination in 1895 as Fouq himself is on record to have said that he started writing Urdu poetry during his student days at a Middle School in Jam-

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kay town between 1892 and 1894. Fouq was appointed as a Patwari in the revenue department. It is said that his first Urdu poem was titled as "Payam" which was published in a magazine of the same name from Lucknow. The poem reads like:

Najad abad hay Laila teray Deewnay say

Fouq used to have the title Shouq during those days. Neverthless, when he once sent a Ghazal to *Intikhab e Lucknow*, the editor of the magazine returned the piece with the remarks that his friend Dous Mohammad Zaheer Ahsan too had the title Shouq; and therefore he could not publish the poetry of any other poet having the title Shouq again. However, he further suggested to Mohammad that he should start using the title *Fouq*, which was willingly accepted by the addressee. He chose Dag Dehalvi as his master and his Urdu was appreciated by people across India. Even Allama Iqbal praised his use of Urdu in poetry.

Apart from being a poet, Fouq was also a prominent journalist. He worked as the correspondent for the *Paysa*, and then started his own *Panja e Fawlad*, a monthly magazine in 1901, which earned praise of Allama Iqbal in these verses:

Panja e Fawlad ik Akhbar hai
Jis say sara Hind Waqif kar hai
Rang e Azadi hai har ik Mazmoon mai
Sard hokar bhi yeh mewadar hai
Hay rawish iski pasande khawas o aam
Wah wah kya mutadil akhbar hai
Koun hai is bankay parchay ka mudeer
Bath to yeh qabil e Izahar hay
Nam hai is ka Mohammad din Fouq
Omar choti hai magar Hoshyar hay

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In 1904, Fouq sent a written request to Maharaja Pratap Singh for the publication of a newspaper from Srinagar by the name of *Kashmir*. The Maharaja not only turned down the request but also directed his ignorant vizier to come up with a law whereby all such requests would be automatically nullified. A foolish law was imposed on the freedom of expression, wherewith even three consecutive applications of Lala Malik Raj for the publication of *Akh Wafadar Sarkar* were turned down which he had written upto 1923 after the application of Mohammad Din Fouq.

Panja e Faulad of Fouq got closed in 1905. Just one year after that, Fouq started a monthly magazine by the name of *Kashmiri Magazine,* which became a weekly in 1913. This newspaper was named *Akhbar Kashmiri* which continued to be edited by Fouq upto 1933.After Fouq, Resha Sehrayi took over as the editor of *Akhbar Kashmiri* .This newspaper got closed down just one year after Sehrayi took over as the editor of the same. Fouq started *Risala Ye Tasawuf* in 1914, thus, he continued his journey as an Urdu journalist to serve the oppressed Kashmiri people Service of the nation was the central aim of his journalistic life as he aptly summarizes in this couplet:

Walihana Ishq hai Kashmir Say
Ruh Zakhmi hai watan kay teer say

If Fouq is discussed in detail as a journalist, this would in fact be a book in itself. In the present write up, I am mainly concerned with those aspects of his journalism that enlightened the Urdu reading people of India about the atrocities committed by Dogras on Kashmiri people, and earned the support of many Mahasabhai newspapers in 1931 when our freedom struggle started. Fouq was at the forefront of this mission, and he was perhaps the at vanguard of the journalist fraternity in the mission of awakening the conscience of people regarding Kashmir. Just before 1931, he would write:

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Kashmir hay ik Shair magar soya huwa hay
Jagay ga mushkil say na jayey ga sanbhala
Jis dam wo dhaday ga to gonj uthay gi dunya
Larzaygi zameen hungay samandar tah wa bala

In 1931, he mused in these words:

Tum apnay pawun kay chalun ko ro ro kar yun na Dekho
Kisi dn phool barsaingay inhain talwuun kay chalun say

After 1931, he talked about Kashmir in this way:

Sabab shorish e Kashmir to jo kuch ho magar
Aaj Kashmir kehta hai ki baidar hun main

Or

Golyun say hai jinhain khop na talwarun say
Ho lab jin ko nahin teerun ki buchadun say

Fouq would spend the summer months in Kashmir and the winter in Lahore. In Kashmir, he would compose nationalist songs and infuse a new lease of life in the initial caravan of freedom struggle against the Dogra oppression led by Munshi Ghulam Mohammad Khadim. Two sons of Gh Mohammad Khadim, Mohammad Abdullah and Mohammad Manzoor Dar, were the students of Sopore High School upto 1935 when I was also a student there. Sopore High School was then a center of the Muslim Conference and the Young Man's Association. Lal Mohammad Khan was the headmaster of the school. He was probably from Mir Pore. He was a close friend of Fouq and had given freedom to students for participating in agitation against the Dogra state. Upon gaining maturity, I came to know that Fouq had actually given him a tip regarding certain developments in Kashmir as some selfish Muslim leaders had by then started trying their best to break the unity among Muslims. Fouq

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and his friends, Chodhry Khushi Mohammad, Munshi Siraj ud Din and Il mud Din Salik, were very much active in strengthening the unity of Muslims so that the freedom struggle did not get affected by the conspiracies of the enemy. Maharaja Hari Singh had in these very days passed an ordinance (19-L) which was being strongly used against the agitators. Undisturbed by the ordinance, all the boys of Sopore High School in general and two brothers of Fouq ,Mohammad Abdullah and Mohammad Manzoor Dar. Aman Ullah Khan Hauahum, Abdul Gani Mala Watargam, Young Abdullah, Aman Ullah, Gh Ahmad Mir and Abdus Subhan Ganayi and myself were nominated as the members of the Muslim Young Man's Association in those days. I had been canned by the Dogras during those days of agitation and had joined the High School after five months bed rest when Fouq Sahab visited the High School. His cousins (alive when this paper was written by Hajini) arranged my meeting with Fouq Sahab. He encouraged me a lot and gifted me his book *Tareekh Aqwam e Kashmir* .I was then a student of 8th class and never knew that Fouq Sahab had been contributing a lot for the freedom of Kashmir even though he lived outside Kashmir. He continued to inspire Kashmiris upto 1945 as on 14th September 1945 this great scholar, poet, journalist and ideologue of our freedom struggle passed away. Prof. Ilm ud Din Salik would call him *Mujadid e Kashamiry* (The Revivalist of Kashmiris). May he rest in peace!

Fouq has written above sixty small pamphlets. Besides, his major contributions are:

1.*Complete History of Kashmir* (Mukamal Tareekh e Kashmir); 2.*Shabab e Kashmir*; 3.*Takeekh e Badshahi*; 4.*Tareekh e Aqwam e Kashmir*; 5.*Kashmir ki Ranya*; 6.*Tareekh Aqwam e Punch*; 7.*Khawateen e Kashmir*; 8.*Mashaheer e Kashmir*; 9.*Islam aur Kashmir*; 10.*Tareekh ka Roshan Pehlu*; 11.*The Leaders of Hunud* (*Rehanumayan e Hunud*; 12.*Butan e Haram.*

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Biographies

1.*Sawanih Tan Sain*; 2.*Sir Jagdesh Chandar Bos*; 3.*Gani Kashmiri*; 4.*Lal Arifa*; 5.*Raja Sukj Jeewan Mal*; 6.*Sawaneh Shamas Tabrezi*; 7.*Hayat e Farishta*; 8.*Ibrahim Adham*; 9.*Muhib Watan Khawateen*; 10.*Sad Zuglool Padshah*; 11.*Maharaja Ranjeet Singh*; 12.*Kashmir Ka Nadirshsh*; 13.*Mulla Du Piyaza*; 14.*Tazkirat us Saliheen*; 15.*Sawaneha Maulana Rumi*; 16.*Seerat e Fareedya*; 17.*Gazi Mohammad bin Qasim*; 18.*Tazirat e Ulmaye Lahore*; 19.*Fateh e Multan*; 20.*Tazkirat e Sufiyaye Lahore*; 21.*Hayat Data Ganj Bakhsh*; 22.*Raja Beerbal*; 23.*Raja Todarmal*; 24.*Mujid aur Ieejaden*; 25.*Khawateen e Dakkin*; 26.*Akhbar Naweesun Kay Halat*; 27.*Azan e Butkadan.*

Ethics

1.*Aayeen e Akhlaq*; 2.*Naseh e Mushfiq*; 3.*Hikmat kay Moti*; 4.*Ustadun aur Talib Ilmun kay Lateefay*; 5.*Zanana Hazir Jawabiyan*; 6 *Riwayat e Islam.*

Hikayat

1: *Hikayat e Kashmir* ;2.*Chodah Hikayat* ;3.*Sabaq Aamoz Kahaniyan.*

Novels

1. *Khana Burbadi*; 2.*Anarkali*; 3.*Akbar e Azam*

Geography

1. *Shalamar Bagh*; 2.*Shahi Sair e Kashmir*; 3.*Rehanmay e Kashmir*; 4.*Lahore Ahd e Mughaliya*; 5.*Mystaries of Amritsar.*

Poetry

1.*National Anthams*; 2.*Manzoom Siyasat e Kashmir*; 3.*Wijdani Nashtar*; 4.*Kalam e Fouq* (Three Volumes); 5.*Nagmaye Gulzar.*

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A cursory review of all these books is not the theme of this article as the pure material of history cannot be reviewed or commented upon in this small article on Fouq as a historian. Most of his history works are pioneering works of the field in Urdu language wherein Fouq must have erred at many places as a human being. He might have even recorded legends as historical facts or invalid information might have been recorded as factual information at times. Nevertheless, this article is not intended to prove Fouq as the greatest historians of Kashmir; rather, the simple assumption and intention behind writing this article is to show how Fouq showed to the Urdu reading world the history of Kashmir, South Asia and other places and people at a time when a minority of Professors was sure of the thing in the whole South Asia as most of our history was still in Persian language yet to be translated for the Urdu reading class. It was also a fact that our history in Persian language was being accessed by a few people only as most of such works were being eaten by moth in the Indian Office Library with no readership worth name. However, in this scenario, Fouq literally burned midnight oil for composing the history of Kashmir, Islam and people and thus preserved a valuable treasure of information and knowledge in Urdu language which earned him the title "Mujadid" from some important critics of the time. Had there been no religious connotations in the use of the term "Mujadid", everybody would have perhaps agreed with Professor Salik who gave this title to Fouq by reviving the history of Kashmiri people after it had literally died due the eclipse caused to Persian and Sanskrit languages by the historical and political changes that be in using this title for Fouq because of the poverty of Kashmiri people and the negligence shown by others towards the same for the reasons that are well documented in such cases and circumstances. A brief summary of some of his history works is given as under:

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1. *Mukamal Tareekh e Kashmir* (1).It is a summary of *Raj Tarangni*; Volume 2 of the same book talks about the Kings of Kashmir, Mughal Rulers and Afghan rulers of Kashmir,and Volume 3 of the book talks about the Sikh Period of Kashmir history;
2. *Shabab e Kashmir.* This book is about the history of ups and downs of Kashmir, and it gives the details of the glories that the period of Badshah endowed Kashmir with;
3. *Tareekh e Badshahi* is a detailed biography of Sultan Zain ul Aabideen;
4. *Tareekh e Aqwam e Kashmir.* It is in two volumes. It discusses in detail the family and tribal events of Hindus ,Muslims and Sikhs of Kashmir with detailed background analysis of different castes and tribes of kashmiris;
5. *Kashmir ki Ranyan.* It is biographical record of those queens of Kashmir who are known for their love of knowledge, wisdom and politics;
6. *Khawateen e Kashmir* .It is a detailed history of those women of Jammu and Kashmir who have made significant contributions to knowledge production, history of Kashmir and the politics also;
7. *Mashaheer e Kashmir.* It mentions those Kashmiris who have been famous for their character and role in different fields of life from the ancient period of Kashmir history to the present;
8. *Islam and Kashmir.* It mentions the role of those Awliya e Kiram and preachers who introduced the message of Islam to Kashmiri people from the period of Sahdev;
9. *Tareekh ka Roshan Pehloo.* I could not find this book, with the result, could not say anything about its theme and content;

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10. *Tareek e Aqwam e Punch.* Again, I could not get and read this book. However, the very title of the book is suggestive enough regarding its subject matter;
11. *Butan e Haram.* It mentions those queens who were Hindus by faith and were married to Muslim kings and Rajas;
12. *Rehanumayan e Hunud.* I read this book in my childhood and it is not available this time in the market. However, its title is itself suggestive of its contents.

All these works are individually separate pillars of Kashmir history by themselves; nevertheless, if those small pamphlets of Fouq are also read with them, which he wrote as biographies of different people, it would be quite clear for us to understand the overarching contributions of Fouq to the Kashmir history. Collection of materials for such a topic of broader scope and then dwelling on it with a historian's pen is not an easy task. But, Fouq's pen showed it that when a man is sincere, brave and up to a constant struggle, such greater missions are not impossible for him to achieve. The Kamraz belt of Kashmir has this pride that one of its sons, Kalhan, produced Kashmir history in Sanskrit language; another,Hasan Shah Khuihami, went on to write it in Persian; Wahab did it in Kashmiri, and Fouq of late did all this in Urdu. All the four have made tremendous contributions for the preservation of Kashmir history, and thus kept alive for all the times to come the collective memory of Kashmiri people acting on the belief that has been unconsciously put to verse form by Fouq in these words:

Apnay Mustaqbal ko tu Mazi kay aayeenay may Dekh
Shukar khaliq ka ki ab tak kuch nishan baqi to Hain
Ab bhi tu chahay to roshan nam ho aslaf ka
Masalay rah naqsh paye rehrawan baqi to hain

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By virtue of this belief, Fouq would give an inspiring message to his fellow country men in these words:

Tuj main gayrat ho to galib taj par aasakta hay kon
Tuj main juraat ho to phir aankhain dikha sakta hay kon
Han na ghabra rehmat e haq meharban hojayigi
Jannat e Kashmir ik din phir jawan hojayigi

Note

This paper was originally written in Kashmiri by Professor Hajini. Ameen Fayaz has rendered it into English for the benefit of scholars working on Kashmiri Literature and Language.

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Shahnama Firdousi and its Kashmiri Translation by Wahab Parray Hajini: A Comparative Study

Persian literature has four such works that have been acknowledged as masterpieces by literary critics and masters of the subject: *Shahnama e Firdousi*, *Masnawi* of Maulana Rumi, *Gulistan e Saadi Shirazi* and *Deewan i Hafiz*. Of the war poetry in Persian literature, *Shahnama* has been accepted as an unprecedented and unparralled piece of work which has in it all those diverse elements and features of classical craftsmanship which make it appealing, attractive and subject of eternal readership across the world. Themetically, this epic revolves around the Persian pride and glory, Iranian world view and attitude towards the making of history and conquest and bravery of Iranian heroes, which for sure make it a national epic of the Persian literary and a national narrative on the making of its history and glorious past.

From historical point of view, *Shahnama* has in it the traces of four thousand and two years of Persian history, which Firdousi has divided into the ruling periods of four dynasties: 1) The Dynasty of Pesh Dadyan; 2) The Dynasty of Kay; 3) The Dynasty of Ashkanyan, and

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4) the Dynasty of Sasanyan. The Peshdadi dynasty rule has been shown spanning over the period of two thousand four hundered and forty one years, and only rulers of this dynasty have been mentioned. Being the prehistoric period of the Persian empire, most of the events of this period are either based on assumptions or just mythological representation of human aspirations for empire building and idealization of the history, for example the sayings that three emperors of the period have ruled over the period of twenty two hundered years (Jamshaid –Seven hundered years, Zuhak–one thousand years and Fareedon Five hundered years). The capital of all these emperors has been shown as Ustakhar which has been the holy city of Persia for quite a long time as appears to be the case in the literature available on the subject.

In the earlier part of Peshdadi dynasty rule in Persia, the Aryans were yet to get divided into two permanent races, that is why the Peshdadi period reflects a good amount of Indian influence on Persian beliefs, culture and languages. Mythological representations of the Universe and interpretation of things were quite common in this period. Firdousi has shown this period beginning with Keumarch who is considered Adam in Oustayi religion.

Second important ruling dynasty appearing in *Shahnama* is Kay which has been ruling Persia over a span of seven hundred and thirty two years, and of which only ten emperors have been discussed and described by Firdousi.In fact ,the hero and the main protagonist of *Shahnama*, Rustam, appears in this very part of the Persian history. Firdousi has consumed the best of his imagination and literary craftsmanship on the achievements and bravery of this Persian hero, and this very dynasty appears to be an omnipresent and a recurring ideal in the collective unconscious of Persian people and has been a dominant ideal consciously or unconsciously in all the representations of Persian glory and past (In this whole period, Iran could be subjugated

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for ten years only by a Turk namely Afrasiyab). The racial superiorty complex of this period continues to dominate Iranian psyche in the way as it had been preceded by the religious traditions of the Peshdadi period.

Third important dynasty that has been shown ruling Persia is Ashkanyan.This was the period of foreign rule of Parthians and other outsider nations. Firdousi has made a little mention of this dynasty in his epic. The last ruler of the Parthian dynasty namely Urdawan was killed by Urd Shairan who laid the foundations of the Sasani dynasty rule in the history of Persia.

The way Firdousi has presented and represented these different phases of Persian history confirms the fact that he has consciously tried to prove that Iran has never accepted foreign subjugation and has always fought for the maintenance of its freedom, independence and self-reliance. Of particular importance attached with this period is the conquests of Alexander, the great, who after having done with Iranian rule revolutionized the Iranian society and civilization. Even though Iran was divided into two hundred forty smaller kingdoms of which many kings were the natives of Iran, yet this period reflected chaos and confusion from all the sides. This is why Arab historians refer to this period as the period of anarchy in the history of Iran.

Actually, Firdousi did not have access to the materials on the history of this period. He had to, therefore, assume and imagine the history of the kings of that time with reference to the landlords and kings of his own time. Even Firdousi has from the times of Sikandar Failqusi, i.e; Urdshairbayi to the times of the Sasani dynasty minimized five hundered sixty years to two hundred and sixty six years only. During this period, any landlord who under Greek viceroys (called straps at that time) tried and got himself racially associated with the Kiyani dynasty, Firdousi found and presented him as the real

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king even though the fact of the matter is that Iran at that time was mostly under foreign control.

Fourth ruling dynasty appearing in *Shahnama* is the Sasani dynasty that has been shown ruling Iran for around four hundered and twenty three years. This dynasty ruled Iran between Two Hundered and Twenty Nine and Six Hundered Fifty Two Years of Christian era, and fact of the matter about this period is that superstions, mythological representations and unnatural explanations and interpretations of things showed the greatest decline in this very period of Persian history, though in the early part of this period adventures and achievements of historical figures have been presented with a tinge of supernaturalism, mythology and legendary representation and presentation as has been very rightly mentioned by AG Brown. The Iranian pride and the glory of Majoosi religion have been recorded by Firdousi in this period in such a way that even after embracing Islam impressions of those archetypes could not be removed from their collective unconscious. In fact, this very period strengthened those attitudes and worldviews of Iranian people that scholars on the subject confirm as to have become the archetypes in their collective thinking.

Though Firdousi has suggestively shown the inner conflict between Zuhak and Jamsheed with reference to Samis and Aryans, the fact of the matter is that the political underpinnings of this attitude and worldview continued even after the arrival of Islam in Iran. According to Brown, when we attempt a deep study of Persian philosophy and religious make up we are forced to conclude that their worldview and relious make up have deep roots in their past and have become endemic, and whenever it finds a suitable catalyst for getting expressed as a whole or partially it all of a sudden becomes epidemic (This could be a typical orientalist view of Brown, nevertheless, Prof Mohi ud Din Hajini has a reason to quote it indirectly as in Firdousi

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he sees a particular attitude at work with reference to Islamic heroes and their conquest of Persia), particularly in religious and political movements of Iran. That is why if we say that this very racial superiority complex continued to dominate Iranian collective unconscious up to 1979, in the form of Bahayiat (in religious terms) and politically in the form of Raza Shahi monarchy, when Imam Khumeni did away with it by bringing about the much talked about "Islamic Revolution". The first two above mentioned dynasties which belong to Asateeri Period, and the third dynasty of foreign rule are historical in the sense that these dynasties have actually ruled Iran in their times; and the cultural impressions of those like the Jashni Nawroz, palmistry, racism and untouchability, were still alive in the times of Firdousi. Firdousi knew the traditions of pre-historic period, the literature of Oustai and Pahalwi period and the folk literature of Iran that had been transmitted orally from one generation to another. All this happened to be the material of Firdousi's *Shahnama* as Iran had not emanicipated itself from the imprints of the mythology, superstitions and pride in its racist worldview. One of the famous orientalists Noldeke has collected many such events that show the Iranian love for wars which for centuries continued to act as an influence on Iranian writers and thinkers to present Iranians as an unconquerable people in the times of war.

The Common Sources of Firdousi for writing *Shahnama*

Firdousi had imagined hundreds of years of Persian history alive for the construction of Rustam as the hero and chief protagonist of *Shahnama*, and Rustam is not an unparralled hero of Oustayi literature because he had embraced the Majoosi religion but because he had blinded one of the heroes of Majoosi religion, Isfindyar ,the man whose father, Gashtashap, had introduced the Majoosi religion as the official religion of Iran. Nevertheless, it is a fact that one of the brave

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solidiers of Persian army who was killed by the Arab military in the battle of Qadisiya in 635 was also named Rustam.Historians and critics of Persian literature differ as to whether Firdousi had this very brave solidier of Iran in mind for writing a Persian narrative or he had some other Persian hero of the same name in his mind from the mythology of Persia for writing the glorious history of the making of his people and nation. However, there is no dispute among historians and critics of Persian literature regarding the fact that Firdousi had been collecting the materials for *Shahnama* for thirty long years and was partially doing the poetic representation of the same; and when he once presented the story of Isfindyar to the king, Sultan Mehmood Gaznawi, he got the orders for the composition of the whole *Shahnama*.Some of the sources in which the stories of *Shahnama* appear are mentioned here:

1: *Karnama Urd Shair Babkan* (It is a historical novel on the Sasani period of Persian history);

2: *Jamasap Nama* (Mythological adventures of Iranian Kings);

3: *Urd aur Namuk* (This is a book of Majoosi theology written in third century);

4: *Yatkar Zareenan* (This is a romantic story);

5: *Qisa e Sijan* (It has the stories on the events of migration of Parsis from Iran;

6 : *Ousta* (This manuscript had according to Brown some Two Lakh Forty Seven Thousand words on the Sasani period.Most parts of this manuscript have gone waste and only some Eighty three Thousand have been preserved and Firdousi must have for sure benifitted himself from it also); and, 7: *Pahalwi Khudayi Nama.*

Apart from all these sources mentioned above, many manuscripts on the history of Iran of Tchand period were possibly available in Pahalwi, Persian or Arabic languages which Firdousi might have consulted for the great literary project that he was going to undertake. It

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would be in place to mention that most of such manuscripts are rare now a days and hard to locate. The history of Persia in the poetic form had not been the subject of any poet before Daqeeqi. When Daqeeqi had only composed some thousand verses or so on the Gashtashap king and Zoraster, he was assassinated by one of his servants. Firdousi has it that Daqeeqi appeared before him in a dream and requested him to complete the project. Pahalwi language continued to be used by the people of Iran up to around 900AC. With the arrival of Islam in Iran, the custodians of Pahalwi language started migrating towards India, and they still considered *Shahnama* an important work on the ancient Iranian civilization. Parsis still consider Alexander the condemned and damned Romi, as he is believed to have uprooted the Iranian civilization and the Oustayi religion; however, the conquest of Iran by Greek rulers is not commented on with such contempt and disregard. Sikandar is believed to have destroyed those animal skins that had on them in golden letters the manuscripts of Ousta (According to historian Masoodi), and he burned down the whole of Ustakhar city. Firdousi constructed an imaginary story about Iskandar saying that actually he was the son of the king of Iran namely Dara from his wife namely Maryam, the daughter of Failqusi. Another historian Nizami went a step ahead saying that he (Sikandar) was actually the Zul Qarnain mentioned in the Holy Qur'an, which again seems to be a myth as the Qur'an does not specify anything about Zul Qarnain, spatially and temporally. Among all the Pahalwi sources, *Khudayinama* may be considered one of the important sources that Daqeeqi might have consulted as it gives a detailed account of the Iranian kings from the times of Keumarch to Khusraw Parwaiz. It is said that this work had been actually completed by Dehqan Danishwaran during the ruling period of Yazdarjurd 3rd, and Abdullah ibn Muqafah had translated it into Arabic language, which, however, is not available today along with the original. This topic was re-

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searched in detail in the last decade of 19th century and first two decades of 20th century by many Europeans in order to see and verify the sources that Firsousi might have considered and consulted for writing *Shahnama*. The profound research of these scholars on the subject has made some important revelations which prove this assumption right that Firdousi had apart from other sources used *Khodainama* also for writing his *Shahnama*. Noldeke has gone on to write that the scribes of Ousta had no wholistic knowledge of Dastan e Seestan, that is why the Persian heroes like Sam, Zal, Rustam, Narayman and Suhrab did not have importance for them. Contrary to this, A G Brown writes that Rustam is mentioned at two to three places in the last phase of Sasani period of Persian history, and his military expeditions continued to be transmitted orally from person to person up to 7th and 8th century and it is quite probable that the statue of Rustam's horse (that was called Raksh) was spotted by Arab Mujahideen at Seestan.

In comparison with Firdousi, those Arab historians who studied Persian history would be quite surprised by the Iranian mythology and stories on supernatural powers. Many Arab historians even attempted to change the names of characters appearing in the Iranian mythology and supernatural stories, for example, they may refer to Zardusht as Prophet Ibraheem, Ousta as the *Saheefa e Ibraheem*, Fareedon as Prophet Sulaiman and Madayan as Jamsheed, etc. However, most of the Arab historians would not try to justify the mythological stories of Persia, and would rather simply reject such stories as superstitions, for example, a critic like Ibn Muqaffah, historians like Masoodi and Yaqoobi would even go to this extent that Iranian belief that Zuhak had two man eating snakes on his shoulders; that Isfindyar was made of metal, and that the kings of Persia lived for hundreds of years are all idle tales and frivolous fables. Nevertheless, Firdousi despite being a Muslim accepted these stories and composed them in

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poetic language in such a way as if they were real historical events. Firdousi perhaps did so because he wanted to do an exemplary representation of the old Iranian nation and the faith and beliefs of its people unlike what a Muslim historian could have done. The times of Firdousi were engulfed by the environment of old supernaturalist traditions and mythology so much so that according to Western critics like A G Brown for writing a national narrative in the form of an epic these mythological traditions were bound to influence and shape the mind of a writer like Firdousi as he (Firdousi) would have it in *Shahnama*:

Manam Kardmish Rustam Dastan
Digar na yalay buwad dar Seestan

This is the same Rustam who by virtue of his unprecedented valour ,courage and warrior-manship conquered enemies of Iran like Afrasiyab, supernatural enemies like genies, fairies and other monsters; even mastered the supernatural powers as shown in the epic.

If we see the tradition of epic writing and war poetry across the world, a common pattern of using the supernatural elements as part of the structure of the poem with extraordinary powers could be located in all of them. Irrespective of differences of times and places and cultures, this commonality would be found in epics of Homer, Valmiki, Firdousi and other such masters of the world literature. All of these epics have mythological elements, supernatural characters and such features of power that are not normally associated with human beings, and the mastery of art in all these writings lies in the fact that fiction and fact have been embedded to each other in such a way that the readers find themselves caught in an unending gyre of uncertainty, and there is always a "willing suspension of disbelief" at work while going through such narratives. Basically, writers like Firdousi aim at constructing ideals of valour and courage for their people

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through such narratives that is why *Shahnama* becomes a national epic of Persia and Rustam an ideal of courage and valour for all the Persian heroes thereby comes the politics of nation making and empire building embedded to a literary text like *Shahnama*. Firdousi has done it with the best of his literary magic, that is why critics agree that there is no parallel to it in the world literature, not even when Allama Faizi tried to develop a counter argument to *Shahnama* in the form of *Qisa e Amir Hamza*.

Translations of *Shahnama*

Shahnama has been translated into many languages of the world, and in Kashmiri language Wahab Parray undertook this daunting task in the medium of poetry itself. A list of translations of *Shahnama* is given here:

1. J Itkenson (English), Published in 1832;
2. E Warner (English), Published in 1905-1925;
3. J Mohi (French);
4. J Gores (German), Published in 1820;
5. A Vonschak (German), Published in 1851;
6. F Ruckert (German), Published in 1890-1995);
7. A Fizzi (Italian), Published in 1880-1900
8. Wahab Hajini (Kashmiri), Published in 1880-1900.

The translation of Wahab Parray is in four volumes of which three volumes are the translation of the *Shahnama* Firdousi and the fourth volume titled *Khilafatnama* is the response of Wahab Hajini to the themes of the original *Shahnama*.The volume 1 has 7013 verses; volume two has 5106; volume 3 has 4706, and the volume 4 of the work has 6666 verses of which 2484 have been translated from the *Shahnama* and 4184 are the composition of Wahab himself. In the *Khilafat-*

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nama, 6752 verses have been published with around 752 as the addenda to the main composition.

Two hundered ninety verses in the prologue 1st of the *Khilafatnama* are dedicated to the Calips of Islam from Banu Umaiya dynasty to the contemporary of Wahab, Sultan Abdul Hameed Khan. All these verses show the indepth study of Islamic history by Wahab Hajini, and it has nothing to translate from Firdousi's *Shahnama*. There are one hundered twenty one prayer type of verses of which only twenty one have been kept in the edited version of Kashmiri *Shahnama*. After making necessary deletions during editing, the fourth volume of *Shahnama* of Wahab could be found in this order:

1. From Nausheerwan to Yazdjurd: 2641 verses;
2. Victories of Islam: 3520 verses;
3. Prayer type of verses: 121 verses;
4. Total number of verses in *Khilafnama*: 6182 verses.

It would be in place to mention here that the total number of translated verses from Firdousi's *Shahnama* is 19307, and rest of the verses and compositions that appear in the work of Wahab are his own.

Thousands of verses have been falsely attributed to Firdousi by his followers and this is why there is a difference with regard to actual number of verses in different manuscripts of *Shahnama*. People have stretched the number of his verses from forty six thousand to fifty six thousand. How this difference occurred and in what manuscripts these additions were incorporated has been thoroughly discussed and deliberated upon in the manuscript published from Calcatta, India. Allama Shibli Nomani and Professor Sheerani have also deliberated on the issue in their own way. The Bombay edition of *Shahnama* has published and printed the additional ten thousand verses, and it is said that Wahab had actually seen this very Bombay edition of

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Shahnama first, which he could not study as upon borrowing it from a neighbor, Qazi Gh Rasool, he had to return it within one or two days due to the desperation shown by the Qazi upon lending the manuscript to Wahab. Wahab then purchased a Lucknow edition of *Shahnama* and studied the same (which is available with his immediate heirs even now). This edition of *Shahnama* has omitted all the unauthentic parts and verses of *Shahnama*, a daunting task undertaken by the compiler and editor of the manuscript of course. However, it is quite surprising that satire of Sultan Mahmood has not been included in those unauthentic parts of *Shahnama* deleted by the editor of Lucknow publication, though many Eastern and Western critics and scholars of *Shahnama* admit that the satire of Sultan Mahmood in *Shahnama* is the handiwork of Firdousi's followers. Wahab has nowhere mentioned the satire, thus indirectly hinting that the satire is fake and is the handiwork of some mischief monger to demonize the image of a pious king like Sultan Mahmood.

Apart from this satire of Sultan Mahmood in *Shahnama*, Wahab has omitted many other unauthentic parts of *Shahnama*. Firdousi completed *Shahnama* in 1010 AD, and Wahab completed the translation in 1900 AD exactly after 890 years of its composition by Firdousi. He started the translation of this masterpiece literary work when he was thirty five years old. It took Wahab nine years to complete the translation of the first three volumes of *Shahnama* and eleven years to compose the fourth volume titled *Khilafatnama*. This has been a pioneering and monumental work undoubtedly in Kashmiri literature as prior to Wahab nobody has perhaps tread this path, which is duly testified to by the history of Kashmiri literature. Wahab Parray has maintained it in his daily diary that he would be awfully busy with mundane affairs and official duty, and would have only four hours' rest in the night thereby giving maximum time of the night to the reading of *Shahnama* and its translation in Kashmiri.

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Such unprecedented resistance and hardwork is attributed to only two scholars of the world: British Mathematician, John D and Hakim Bu Ali Saina who would sleep for four hours only in twenty four hours, and Wahab may be included in the league of these extraordinary scholars and men of letters.

Reasons behind Translation

Wahab has given two reasons himself for translating Firdousi's *Shahnama* into Kashmiri: first, what he refers to in his own words as "Kharabazi"; second, assertion of religious honour against the satirical portrayal of the Arab heroes by Firdousi in *Shahnama* which he took as a challenge for himself. Had Wahab not used the phrase "Kharabazi" himself in the volume first of *Shahnama*, we would have called it "religious honour" also because somebody had in the township of Hajin reportedly said to Wahab that he loved *Shahnama* more than the *Masnavi* of Maulana Romi. There is an internal evidence from Wahab regarding the same :

Gatche tas Kalame Daroguk hawa
Zi karda Ahadees behtar ye Cha
Ye sorui kalame Daroog wa Kharab
Chu ravi tameuk ei wanan basawab
Ki harguna bar nazm aarastam
Bagoyam dard harchi khod khawastam

It is said that Qazi Gh Rasool of Hajin had purchased the 1815 AD edition of *Shanama* published by a Bombay based publication house from the Punjab(Perhaps this was the first ever Indian edition of *Shahnama*).Wahab requested the Qazi to lend it to him for study. The request was considered .However, just in a day or two, the Qazi sent his son to Wahab seeking the *Shahnama* back with the remarks expressed in anger that he (Qazi) loved *Shahnama* more than the

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Masnawi of Maulna Romi. This angered Wahab and forced him to resolve that he would do the Kashmiri translation of *Shahnama* so that nobody would look for the *Shahnama* purchased by the Qazi. This is how Wahab puts it:

Ti Bozith bagairat setha Khara Goum
Azan keen azan mai dasay nar peum
Sabab yath chu az khara bazi banun
Gayam rayai shahnama kashrawnun

Wahab returned the Bombay edition of *Shahnama* to Qazi Gh Rasool and started looking for a copy of his own. He, after some time, managed to get a copy of *Shahnama* printed and published for the third time then from the Noval Kishore Publication House of Lucknow, and started the translation work from the same. (This *Shahnama* is still available with the immediate heirs of Wahab Parray)

What Wahab would call "Kharabazi" ended before he completed the translation of the first volume of *Shahnama*. However, some of our mis-informed critics could only have the word *Kharabazi* on their heads regarding Wahab as they would often say that Wahab had done *Kharabazi* alone in the twenty years of his translation career mindless of the internal evidence that even though Qazi Gh Rasool provoked him for the translation, yet actually it was after after the thorough study of the text of *Shahnama* the finding of Wahab that Firdousi had crossed the limits about the companions of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and those Arab heroes who brought Islam to Persia and brought down the fires of the Persian pride in mythology and supernaturalism associated with the kings, and the fact that Firdousi actually disliked the non-Iranian rule and used his pen to denounce the same with reference to Arabs that accounted for such a translation of *Shahnama* and a critical response to it in the form of *Khilafatnama*. This is why Wahab spent many years in the study and translation of *Shahnama*,

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and in building its critique in the form of *Khilafatnama,* which, of course, was more of an assertion of his devotion to the Arab Calips who spread Islam in different countries of the world including Iran than what he had initially called his "Kharabazi".

The reading of Persian *Shahnama* can convince any reader about the fact that when Firdousi saw that Sasani Monarchy came to an end with the murder of Yazdurjd by one miller of his own people and the proof thereof that the Iranian belief in divine right of kings was baseless and illogical as a people living in oblivion could over take them, thus introducing for the first time the Islamic Flag in Iran in place of the superstition ridden "Farikiyani" flag of Kawa Ahangar, his tongue got choked and pen stopped and in reaction sprouted the satire of the Arab Mujahideen for having done away with the Sasani Monarchy. Firdousi puts it in these words:

Zi shair Shutr khordan susmar
Arab ra bajaieest raseedsat kar
Ki taji kiyan ra kunand aarzoo
Tafubar tu ay charkhey gardun tafu

In anticipation to this attitude of Firdousi towards Arab Mujahideen, Wahab felt a sense of responsibility to write:

Zi gairat dilas goum galib hawas
Ya shahnama kashrounum pesh wa pas
Thowum kashrin kitch ya shahnama daali
Theki prath akha asi chi shahnama waali
Babazar arzan thouwum karith
Pana dawi durdana thowum jurith

The thing that Wahab basically undertook the daunting and embarrassing task of translating *Shahnama* in order to compose the expeditions and conquests of Islamic heroes is being reminded to us at

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the end of each volume of his work, as, for example, at the end of volume 1st he writes:

Dareen tangee wa kasrate karubar
Shab o Roz mehnat karam ikhtiyar
Me ousum na dar dil yi kehn eitimad
Gachem khatam shahnama e tabazad
Nata gatche na meun harfa Qabool
Karan khatam bar jang e fouj e Rasool (PBUH)

Similarly, at the end of second, third and fourth volumes of *Shahnama* he goes on to write the same thing:

Zi shahnama nahaq heutum dard e sar
Pay jang e Abu Bakr wa Shah e Omar
Zi shamsheer Usman wa Hazrat Ali
Dilairan Iran wa Turan gali (Volume 2)

May tren daftaran heut nahaq dard e sar
May chum chormai daftaruq wunti shar
Muddaa meun that daftars taka chui
May deun ajmas yasrabuk sikka chui
May chum bas bakhatir yuhui dastan
Chi tam aamiyan nish naami chopour (volume 3)
Sapun khatam az fazl e parwardigar
Thouwum name khud zinda dar rozgar (Volume 4)

These concluding remarks of Wahab show very clearly the intent he had behind the translation of this monumental work and the composition of the critique, hence only an ignorant would call it *Kharabazi*. The translation and composition of this work spanned over two decades, and there was constant evolution in his imagination and flow of composition, though in view of his busy schedule he wanted

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to finish it in a shorter span of time which could not happen as he himself has admitted:

Wahabo dareen qisa e tajeel kar
Bagairat che panas heututu dard e sar
Bakhami chunuth pan naras andar
Yithis kasrate karobaras andar

Wahab completed the translation of the original *Shahnama* in nine years,and composed *Khilafatnama* in eleven years. The internal evidence of the text indicates that the translation of *Akbarnama* had given such a deftness to the pen of Wahab in the art of translation that before he could get *Shahnama* in his own library, if he would hear a story of Rustam from a story teller he would compose it in the verse form, and this is why he would often receive requests from his contemporaries regarding the complete translation of Firdousi's *Shahnama* ,which he started doing once he got a copy of *Shahnama* after that incident with Qazi Gh Rasool of Hajin.

Here, a question arises as to if it took Wahab nine years to complete the translation of the original *Shahnama* ,why it took him eleven long years to compose *Khilafatnama*? Wahab has provided answer to this question himself. In his own daily journal, Wahab is reported to have written that upon seeing the biased and slanted attitude of Firdousi against the Arab heroes in *Shahnama*, he decided to write *Khilafatnama* in his own way. He further writes that he had only composed some hundred verses on the subject when the then *Mir Waiz* (Head Priest) of Kashmir, Gh Rasool Shah, visited Hajin and he showed him the work wherein he pointed out certain historical mistakes and suggested reading of the Islamic history in detail, particularly the study of *Magazi us Suhaba*, an important book on the expeditions of the companions of the Prophet (PBUH). This very

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suggestion of the *Mir Waiz* encouraged Wahab for an in depth study of the Islamic history thereby completing the fourth volume of *Shahnama* (titled as *Khilafatnama*, self-composed).

Where it took Firdousi thirty long years for the collection of the materials for *Shahnama*, and ten years in its composition, It took Wahab only twenty years in doing the translation and a learned critique of the subject. Where Firdousi has composed *Shahnama* in forty six thousand verses, Wahab has used only nineteen thousand and three hundered seven verses for its translation, and has used in his own estimate six thousand six hundered and sixty six verses in his self-composed *Khilafatnama*. The compression of the original text done by Wahab could be summarized as:

1. Omissions of (A) Satire of Sultan Mahmood Gaznawi; (B) Unauthentic additions by the admirers of Firdousi, and (3) Panegyrics of the sponsors of Firdousi;
2. Wahab has not done the literal translation of *Shahnama* but has tried to compress the stories wholistically.Where the sub texts of long stories have been kept intact ,he has not let coherence of the stories break in any way, for example, (1) From the Murder of Siyawish to the Murder of Afrasiyab, Firdousi has used Fourteen thousand and three hundered ninety two verses, while as Wahab has used only Five thousand Two Hundered forty Eight verses only;
3. The war between Suhrab and Rustam has been composed by Firdousi in around four hundred verses, and Wahab has narrated the same story in only two hundered verses;
4. From the nocturnal raid of Peeran Wensa to the forgiveness granted to Tous, Firdousi has used four hundered verses and Wahab has used two hundered verses only.

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However, the perfection in the art of translation and recreation by Wahab Parray despite all the precision and omissions made by him is quite evident from the fact that no important incident and event or basic part of a story has been omitted or deleted altogether or no parts have been turned incoherent at all.

5. Effective precision of longer stanzas, for example, Firdousi shows the dialogue between Bahram Chobeen and Khusrow Parvez in three hundered verses, while as Wahab has recreated the same in just seventy verses;
6. Firdousi talks about Muzdak and the end of Muzdakiyat in Ninety verses, while as Wahab uses only seventy verses for the same;
7. Wahab has used the technique of compression at many places in order to avoid unnecessary repetition as, for example, Haft Khawan e Ispindyar has been compressed to three titles only;
8. Sometimes Wahab uses the technique of summation ,for example, Firdousi would talk about the murder of Geaw in this way:

Hami Guft Rustum iya Namdar
Nadeedast dawran chu tu shaharyar
Daraiga ki badkhawa dilshad gasht
Daraiga ki unjum hama bad gasht
Yakay hafta basog gashta dicham
Bihishtam baraamd zi shewpor dam
Sipah sarbasar bardari pailtan
Zi Kashmir wa Kabul shudand unjaman,

and Wahab would have the same in these three couplets:

Bazablistan watch yamat khabar
Sapun rustams sakhat zairozabar

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Wadan Rustaman chasmau hor khoon
Ba Iran du manzil panun fouj neun
Su watit ba Iran sapun jada shour
Sapun bahar shahzada matam chopour

9. Wahab sometimes compresses the verses/couplets of Firdousi by using an apt Kashmiri phrase/proverb for the same in his translation, for example:

(A) On The Love of Zal and Rudaba
Timau ahd wa paiman kurukh panawaani
Heutuk ishqa naran dazun man maani

(B) Happiness of Sam on sighting Rustam
Bajaldi su Rustam rotan dar bagal
Sapun shad tai gaas mazas dogal

(C) The satire of Zuhak on the divinity of Jamshaid
Cha hamshakl khalqan ta hamaql wa Rai
Chay bali logmut zora lukan khodayi
Agar chuk khoda near barjayi jang
Khodayas ta bandas karo parsang

(D) Defeat of Jamshaid at the hands of Zuhak
Setha luuk az teig e Zuhak moudi
Qaleela zi Iraniyan zinda roudi
Zi haibat sipahani Iran zameen
Galan aasi zan hara kay tapa sheen

(E) On the anger of Jamshaid and the reaction of Zuhak
Ba kur thas chay aawara ta darbadar
Chay tay bay kancha kadi magzi sar
Ti bozith su zuhak khunkhawar gaw
Wichay kya tamis zan pechay nar pew

(F) On the condition of Afrasiyab over the death of Sorkha
Shurew manz sorkha timis ous toth
Setha khasta gaw pholyi manz pewus doth

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10. Wahab had over the years gained a perfect experience of epic writing and hold on the use of Kashmiri language. Wherever he spotted any such event or incident in the *Shahnama* of Firdousi which would match with anything relevant in Kashmir he would place it in his translation with the craft of a master, for example: (a) allusion to Sadarkot Sonawari for showing the underage immature temperament of Shapur, and (b) allusion to Safapora Sonawari for the attack of the Companions. It is quite evident from the *Shahnama* of Wahab that Kashmiri style of speech has been given a more prominent place in the translation and the Persian metaphors have been beautifully localized by the translator with excellent strokes of linguistic craft. The list of verses given below could be taken as samples:

1) *Karan kus chu tas karo paikar jang*
Banay mich trakas khar tas parsang

2) *Diyay yas na pur bar su rab ul jaleeel*
Tamis gou michay noon ta sekay teel

3) *Gareeban tawangar karan lar lar*
Lahas saah patai ruud umeedwar

4) *Gamati asi bay qadr khawar wa zaleel*
Dilas ous telan timan oum teel

5) *Cha kamzoor nadan wa namard drakh*
Akay teera sathen gagar waaji chak

6) *Begah waqta bazaar watith rasm proun*
Behan chi ada puj sanzay jayi hoon

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7) *Ami branchi loh chui lasith ta basith*
Handis chaya khaya peyas naw
8) *bakasrat pewan kala baran*
zan Nata hardaki douni haran zan

9) *Zi shamshair I taazi chaka chak ous*
Lonun aarman zan kramay hakh ous

10) *Biyeth kini sarood shapa shap teer*
Zi talwar tem zan thalan aasi weer

From Letter of Dara to the King of India

11) *Chu afsoos az gardishe rozgar*
Karan chum may braris gagur lara lara

Baimdad suzum sipah bahar jang
Ba chus yeera goumut mangan weera tang

12) *Ratan tema akay chali satena lahas*
Chatan dar hawa teera saaten muhas

Similarly, Wahab has used innumerable Kashmiri allusions in his translation of *Shahnama* which has given an additional value to his descriptions.

Ye Dunya chu narsang gadach malzath
Akis saati doh ta beyis rath
Tasund watnui zan lahan aaw saah
Nata ankhaliken mahen wout dah

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(Ankhol is a marshy area in the Sonawari Tehsil of Kashmir where mosquetoes are found in abundance)

Tasund royi deshith pew wasi wasi
Tagew na mugal deeshthai farsi

Chui kashir katha hasi na wawas daran
Yi nadan bud phanba sai tomba karan

16) *Walau gafilou gaflatuk nasha trau*
Ya samsar chu pancluk manchkhau

In his translation of *Shahnama*, Kashmir, "Kashmiriyat" and Kashmiri style and way of speech could be located at every step, for example, in the following couplets:

1) *Labe gang jaya wuchuk dilpazeer*
Chu Kashmir sarsabz Jannat nazeer

2) *Barun qila bag wa tamer ous*
Gulay sabza manand e Kashmir ous

3) *Khabardar saatas karakh yuthna taar*
Lagi meeth tate houwarch manch waar

4) *Ba yudwai akui mushta layai kalas*
Peyi zan aik dun satrap alas

5) *Grazan ous sarsana saati dazan*
Zi kehn tumbakh nar zan bow azan

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Sometimes, Wahab has compressed two verses in to just one without changing the meaning of the two as, for example, the below mentioned two verses by Firdousi:

Baungsht barkand rukhsar zal
Parakand khak baroutaj way al

Zawara garaiban badareeda chak
Faramarz ra shud bar uo seena e chak

Wahab has translated the two verses in this way:

Zi bahre siyahwash wadan ous zal
Ziwara faramarz aawara hal

Similarly ,the translation seems to happen in apparently a disloyal style to the main word in the original text; nevertheless, the expressions and words chosen never betray the daily Kashmiri and Persian linguistic experiences as, for example, the following verses of Firdusi and their translation by Wahab Parray Hajini:

Zi bar ku dasht dar andarun
Hami rand rudaba chun ruda khun
Shikam gasht farba wa tan shud giran
Shud aan argawani rakhash zafran

(Firdousi)

Su rodaba khatoon sapani barwar
Gayay zard bilkul zi dard e jigar
Shikam zan kaneu saati ousus barith
Hekan asana junbidha kehn karith
Shab war oz tas maaj aasai wadan
Tamis ziyada tar bar ousus thadan

(Wahab)

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On the death of Manochehar, Firdousi has composed many verses in *Shahnama* on the subject of mortality of the things and life of man in this world. Wahab has dwelled on the subject with apt Kashmiri metaphors and day to day real life experiences in Kashmiri language:

Yi dunya chi pachi laaz hanz ata gath
Khalayaq chi rahraw dawan wata gath
Chu zan bar heth karwana taran
Ba manzil pakan akh ta beakha thakan
Bayak ja pas wo pesh saari saman
Yehai wath chai ath nawi saari laman
Pata bruhn atha nawi saari was an
Nazar kar wadan akh ta bekha asan
Yi samsar chui maala kui nawagath
Taran kaati kadlas karan kharapath

There are many such spots in the translation of Wahab where episodes of the story have not been taken as a whole for the translation, but emotions and feelings expressed have been caught and vividly depicted in the translation work as, for example, in the below mentioned verses:

Hami nan kashki faraz aawardam
Chaneen rand eezad qaza bar saram
Baray yalay beechun shor bakht
Fatadam zi taj wa fatadam zi takhat
Azeen zar tar chun bawad rozgar
Saraarad magar barman een kardgar

(Firdousi)

Na tas teer wa tarkash na khod wa zirah
Gayam tami sandey ishqa nalas girah

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Akay teera karnas giriftar gil
Akay ushwa neumas kadith jan wa dil
May abro kamano ditun zarb e teer
Su az dami gaisun may kor pana geer
Su tab a daran bag yakdil sapani
Bagul chhenaye guncha mayal sapani

(Wahab)

It is evident from the translation of Wahab that wherever he has a contradiction with Firdousi regarding something historical, he has composed his own experience there, and not translated that of Firdousi as, for example, in Nasabnama Sikandar Azam (Lineage of Alaxandar, the Great) and in Description of the death of Kay Khusraw. This may be considered a kind of disloyalty to the original text, but it also suggests the critical insight that he had regarding the text of the original *Shahnama*. The techniques of compression that Wahab has used in his translation work of *Shahnama* have very successfully helped Wahab in minimizing the original Forty Six Thousand Nine Hundered Eighty Two or Fifty Two Thousand Twenty verses of *Shahnama* to just some Nineteen Thousand verses only in Kashmiri language with an addition of some Four Thousand one hundered Eighty two verses of *Khilafatnama*. While Firdousi collected materials for writing *Shahnama* in thirty years and then he gave ten years more to its composition, Wahab did all this, reading of the original, composition of the poetic translation and developing a critique of the same in just twenty years,and this is, of course ,a great piece of work.

Firdousi and Wahab: Similarities and Differences

Firdousi was in most important part of his life preoccupied with the collection of sources for the composition of *Shahnama*, and this seems to have been his sole preoccupation in life; while as Wahab Parray had been busy with so many other issues in his life apart from

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his love for writing poetry. and his translation work of *Shahnama*. Before *Shahnama*, he had tried his hands at *Akbarnama* of Hameed Ullah Islamabadi. Besides writing epic poetry, he was profoundly interested in making experiments with other forms of poetry. He wrote poetry in Ghazals, Nazams, Epics, Odes and other forms also of which only a collection of his poetry titled *Deewan e Wahab* has been published so far.

It would be in place to present some comparison between these two great poets.

Similarities

A) Firdousi and Wahab had rural background, and were proud of it without ever feeling an inferiorty complex about the same as in the words of Wahab Parray:

Ba dehqan dehqaniye kam khirad
Dareen dur dar peeriye payi zad

B) Firdousi had started composition of *Shahnama* before he reached the court of Sulatan Mehmood, and it was during this very time that he lost his younger son. Wahab had two sons of whom one was blind and the other deaf and dumb; and whenever he would see the duo, all the joys of his kingly life would go. Both the poets had by virtue of their very serious family problems turned pessimistic .Firdousi confined himself to the composition of *Shahnama* alone, while as Wahab went on to write other forms of poetry other than epic *Shahnama*.

C) Persian was the second language of Iran at the time of Firdousi as Arabic then happened to be official and literary language there. Kashmiri language was a perfect case of orphanage at the time of Wahab as upto 1885 Persian was the official language of Kashmir,

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which was then displaced by English and Urdu. The first four decades of Wahab were the last years of Persian in Kashmir. Since Wahab was a Govt. employee ,he had to learn and master Urdu language also. It is even said that he had translated into Kashmiri an Urdu epic *Gul-badan*. He always felt for Persian language as could be seen in the following verses of his famous *Shahr e Aashoub*:

Wuni chi angeezi ta Urdu beyi matun badobast
Farsi kala aalawith wuni ya chui az wuni nou tareeq
Farsi khawan dar taasuf keyazi rawur lakachar
Ouknau asi sathi bali ani ye chui az wuni nau tareeq
Wahabo asi kadi panani doh yetha tithe andar meyan
Thaw dil khosh traq wacha tani yechai az wunni nau tareeq

Wahab gave a new lease of life to Kashmiri language and Persian also in the Kashmir of his times, and Firdousi happened to do the same for Persian literature and language through his world famous epic poetry in *Shahnama*. Firdousi got an international recognition by *Shahnama*, and the irony is that Wahab Parray was not even known in Kashmir as an epic poet till Prof. Mohi-Ud-Din Hajini sent a note on his life and works along with a photograph to Iran and the same was published in some newspapers there.

D) Iran and Kashmir were in the worst crisis during the times of Firdousi and Wahab. The Ghaznavit Empire spread from Asphahan to Multan in the times of Firdousi, and Kashmiris were being subject-ed to infamous *Be'gar* and the worst inhuman exploitation by Dogras in all parts of Kashmir including Gilgat, Chilas and Leh in the times of Wahab Parray. The common masses faced the worst turmoil in those times, and the artists did not live a happy life as Firdousi would have it:

Zamana sarai pur az jang buwad
Bajoyandgan ieen jehan tang buwand (Firdousi)

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Ous khalqan hisa Tul, ta Lisa beya hakh hand
Reta kaalis ous tehweeldar hakim anda wand
Temi waqtaki zulm kateh ana bo andar shumar
Luta hakim aasi keuth kya ous mulkas gata kar

(Wahab Parray)

Differences

A) Firdousi was a poor man, that is why he was always in search of a sponsor for earning money, respect and acceptance in the old age. He himself writes:

Bapaiwastam aeen namae bastan
Pasandeeda az daftare pastan
Ki ta roze peeri mura bar dahad
Buzargi wa deenar wa afsar dahad

Contrary to this, Wahab never looked for a sponsor as he was himself a landlord; his poetry and tryst with artistic life was simply motivated by his love for the glories of Islamic warriors and the history of the spread of this great religion. He writes:

Tamis ous az padshahan tamah
Ba mehnat korun yut daftar jamah
Me ousum na az padshahan khayal
May az shoqi khud rawrum yut kal
Sabab goum az jang Saad Waqas
Karan khatam bar jange yaran e khas

Firdousi was looking for a Fareedon type of sponsor and was fortunate to find the company of Sultan Mehmood Gaznavi. Wahab's contemporary was Maharaja Ranbeer Singh who wanted to make

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Dogri language the literary language of the state, and obviously Wahab would have never approached him for any favour. His other contemporary was Maharaja Pratap Singh who was more of a landlord than a king sponsoring scholarly and literary pursuits. The only such contribution that Pratap could make in his time was the publication of some Sanskrit books on behalf of the research center of the government.

B)Firdousi wanted to write his *Shahnama* in chaste Persian, that is why any non-Persian word or expression could be hardly encountered in the text. Contrary to this, Wahab was well aware of the fact that Kashmiri language has always been accommodating, adjusting and internalizing words from Arabic, Persian and Urdu languages and as such the literate speakers of Kashmiri language would have no problem with Persian and Arabic words used with an artistic craft in the text of his translation work of *Shahnama.* He has even Kashmirised the Persian expressions to the extent that such expressions now hardly look and sound Persian. He says:

Akay nerkha peumut me hangni ta dur

Nevertheless, Wahab has despite all Kasmirization of a good number of Persian expressions maintained the chastity of Kashmiri language in his poetry while translating *Shahnama,* and to him undoubtedly Kashmiri language owes a lot for its revival. He puts it in these words:

Shoqa san me yuth tagum teuth karum qaid e qalam
Kashren kitch kar may qayim kashre sharach alam

C) Firdousi, according to some historians, like many great poets of the world suffered on account of some contemporary rival poets, whileas Wahab did not have any contemporary rival poet though he

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had to suffer on account of some of his own relatives who never wished him well. Firdousi writes:

Hasd burd bar koyi dar kari man
Tabah shud bar shah bazaar e Man

And Wahab writes about his relatives:

Chi naraki seraph zan yemi waqtaki lokh
Tami rotnas bay us may atha trowum
Yethi badkesh ta badkar chi az
Phutarnam bana tami yus aab chowum

Or, at another place:

Wuchum may kateh dareen zamana bashakle Insan Dew!
Kehn panzi ta wander, kehn saah ta hapat, kehn huni ta kehn khanzeer

D) Firdousi was motivated by the ambition of showing the glorious history of Iran as he would say:

Basay ranj bardam dareen sal see
Ajam zinda kardam badeen parsi

However, writing poetry and translation of *Shahnama* for Wahab was simply motivated by his love for the Arab heroes of Islam and his love for Kashmiri language. He believed that by translating *Shahnama*, he would first of all show to Kashmiri people the glory of Persian history, and then would draw the map of Islamic history as an addenda and criticism of the same so that Kashmiri people could learn about the

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history of Islam even through reading a Persian text like *Shahnama* in Kashmiri. He was happy to have done this service, specially for liberating the consciousness and understanding of man through deconstruction of myths that abound in Persian *Shahnama*. He writes:

Ba bazaar arzan thowum karith
Pana dawi durdana thowum jarith

The last years of Firdausi's life have become a mystry. In order to bring his monumental work to conclusion, he had to undergo lots of mental trauma and turbulence, but he made it a point that the national epic narrative of the pre-historic period of Iran is made available for the posterity.

E) Firdousi was/is considered and accepted as the hero of nationalists of Iran and an unparalleled epic poet of Persian literature, with the result so much biographical literature was produced and written about him and his literary contributions that his name, his place of birth, date of birth, etc, became points of discord among critics and biographers. The life of Wahab did not face such problems after death. Though he did not have any such progeny after him who would have introduced him to the world or such researchers and critics who would have worked on his literary contributions, yet the same thing may be counted as a blessing for him as too much recording of the stories of his life could have proved sources of confusion for the readers. Since much has been written on Firdousi, the contradictions in reports on different incidents and events in his life continue to be a mystery that could be never solved ,for example, (1)his name: Hasan bin Ishaq (Tareekh e Gazeeda); Mansoor bin Ahmad (Daibacha *Balsaigri*); Hasan bin Ishaq (Daulat Shah) and Abul Qasim Mansoor al Firdousi (Pro.Sheerani); (2) his place of birth: Shadab; Bach and Tehran Pargana Tous; (3) his date of birth: 1) 329 Hijri (Allama

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Shibli) and 2) 322-23 Hijri (Prof. Sheerani). Keeping in view this difference of opinion and research regarding some important aspects of Firdousi's life, Allama Shibli had to say that "If critics have any complaint against Firdousi, it is not that there is shortage of events or absence of the same; it is rather the abundance of the same and the contradictory and opposite views and traditions found thereof."

The first biographical paper on Wahab was published in 1938 in the *Pratap* magazine, and since then no confusing materials were published on his life. The *Deewan e Wahab* was published in 1971, which again became a source of help for details about Wahab. However, some critics like Abdul Ahad Azad and Pandit Premnath Bazaz had committed some imaginary mistakes about Wahab, the reason being that parts of Wahab's *Shahnama* and *Sultani* had been published before 1947, wherein not a single line had been actually written about his life, his literary contributions and his practices in different fields of life.

(F) Firdousi completed *Shahnama* only as epic poetry ,while as Wahab had a vast canvas in the field: Kashmiri *Shahnama*, *Khilafatnama* and *Akbarnama*. The last of the three is the Kashmiri rendering of *Akbarnama* of Hameedullah Islamabadi, which describes and documents the battles between the English, the Afghan and the Sikh forces fought in the 19th century. Therefore, Wahab went beyond *Shahnama* and added to Kashmiri literature a multitude body of around Twenty Five Thousand Eight Hunderd and Thirty Two verses with Nineteen Thousand Three Hundred and Seven in *Shahnama*, Four Thousand One Hunderd and Eighty Two in *Khilafatnama*, and Two Thousand Three Hunderd and Forty one in *Akbarnama*, thereby giving a new lease of life to Kashmiri literature.

Wahab to His Critics

Around thirty years after the death of Wahab Parray, Criticism as a genre and discipline in Kashmiri literature started its formal journey in

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Kashmir. In *Shahnama*, there are some points that Wahab has addressed to his assumed critics so that nobody would have to justify the case in his favour as he has himself spoken something that critics would find very valid and authentic for the textual analysis and understanding of writer's attitude towards the subject. Wahab has written these lines much before criticism as a school of thought came to the fore in Kashmiri literature as if he knew like any other great scribe and author that someday his works of art shall be judged and evaluated by the masters of criticism and its beauty and she comings would be pointed out.

Though Wahab was proud of himself for his ability to translate a bulky classical piece of work like *Shahnama* into Kashmiri, a task that none before him had actually undertaken, yet there was a conscious realization of the fact that there is a certain lack in Kashmiri language for the accommodation of such a great topic and well considered opinion and comprehension about the vastness of literary and linguistic topography of Persian language. He writes in this connection:

May peumut akay nerkha hangni ta dur
Korum khoob wa zusht anithai rishta pur

He considered himself a child as compared with Firdousi in the art of poetry as:

Na sharuk shaoora na may aql wa ray
Baraye safar dras baydast wa payi
Zibabb e samandar korum garq paan
Bagair az tanawar bila imtihan

Despite all this humility, he left his works open for criticism but only to those critics who were masters of the subject in the real sense and knew what is what in art and literature:

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Agar aasihay kahn pokhta gawhar shanas
Me chum tas bakhidmat akui iltimas
Agar aasi kahn dana may khot ta khor
Iwaz thaw baminat ma kar kam ta chor

Doing the comparative study of the Persian *Shahnama* and its Kashmiri translation by Wahab, word by word, verse by verse and episode by episode would not have been the cup of tea of any Tom, Dick and Harray in his times as the work would ask for the whole age of a man. Keeping this thing about his poetry in mind, he addresses critics in these words:

Natay chay na himat badal thawnas
Sifat kya chu khali khochar hawnas
Rasai beh masakar delaiy ranja mai
Yi chu tulmut kayiri danji mai

The expression "Kayiri Danji" itself suggests that Wahab had taken utmost care while translating *Shahnama* into Kashmiri, wherein despite all liberties that he has taken with the original text, he cannot be charged of having compromised with anything important in the original text. He believed that this translation work would be a great work of entertainment and education for the Kashmiri people, and considered it a gift for the Kashmiri people and Kashmiri language:

Ba keh zana keha gau parun ta lekhun
Ye bau nazam tas zati pakas karun
Tasandi iradan mai trowum khayal
Baneu kashiren shugul tufa ye hal

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However, if some critic would want to dig out some imaginary faults in this work, he is told:

Ba chus nukta geeran rattan dast wa payi
Batajeel dehqaniye sust rayi
Yina tama mesaten banan heela ju
Badana korum mukhtasar guftago

And, despite all this humility in his address to the critics who would like to dig out the bones from the text of *Shahnama*, he further addresses them with some anger and satire:

Chi aasan deha bashIyan betameez
Magar chai panani zath sarinai aziz
Panun aab pani wanai saaf saaf
Khata bekhabar gamiyas thaw muaf
Setha sakht bewaya chay greesi chand
Tasund bosa mulai kadan taara khand

After this forewarning by Wahab himself ,if some critic would want to have an academic quarrel with the translator of *Shahnama*, he/she must consider himself/herself lucky and fortunate as there is none among the heirs of Wahab who would break his/her jaws instead of giving him/her a warm hug for the criticism.

Note

This paper was originally written in Kashmiri by Hajini Sahab and has been translated into English by Ameen Fayaz.

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Asad Parray: His Poetry and Understanding of Metaphysical World

After a thorough research on the life of Asad Parray through his contemporaries, it stands confimed that he passed away in April 1916 and not in 1922, earlier written in my paper on him in my book *Maqalat* (1967, p.138).All the sources including Qadir Mir have established his age at the time of his death between sixty and sixty five years, which means that he was born in the year 1851 or 1852, and not 1860 or 1862 which I had earlier heard from Qadir Mir. This was the worst period of Dogra rule in Kashmir. This is a surprising coinincidence that three towering literary geniuses of Hajin were born in and around this very particular phase of oppression in Kashmir history: Molvi Siddiq Ullah in the year of the Sher Singh famine ;Wahab Parray in the year of the infamous Amritsar Treaty, and Asad Parray in the last year of the Amani Period,which was the worst phase of the Dogra rule in Kashmir.For the conquest of Chilas in 1851 and Gilgat in 1852, Maharaja Gulab Singh had unleashed a reign of terror in the whole Warmul Wazarat, the scars of which did not go for many years to come. The infamous *Be'gar* (forced

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labour) was the order of the day. People from Zainageer, Khui, Sonawari and Khuhama were forced to carry the luggage of the Dogras all the way to Chilas and Gilgat in summar as well as in winter. Hunderds of Kashmiris would die and be the food for crows while crossing the mountains and terrains leading to Gilgat and Chilas. Whatever the Kashmiris would have in their homes would be taken away by the Dogras and given to their employees as a kind of salary as the norm then was that the salary of Govt. employees would be collected from the harvest of farmers and peasants. Every Kashmiri peasant of the time would in the words of Hasan Shah pay for the salary of around sixty govt. employees. In addition to this state oppression on Kashmiri Muslims, floods and famines had also wreaked havoc on Kashmir of which the famine of the Singh is a notorious example. It was in the backdrop of these times of oppression, famines and floods, Asad Parray was born at Hajin Sonawari.

He suffered from the severest attack of chicken pox and was lucky enough that his eyes did not get damaged by the disease. Before reaching the age of adulthood, he lost his father, Ab Gani Parray. This was the worst of times, so his mother decided to go for second marriage (women folk were the special target of Dogra employees).She married in Srinagar city at some *Malik Sahab Mohalla*. She carried the orphan Asad along. His step father sent him for the training of a tailor. However, it is also said that he had learned tailoring during his early childhood at Hajin, and continued the same as his profession for earning his livelihood till his death. Asad would tailor good skull caps.

The feeling of being an orphan, homelessness, poverty and step fatherly treatment at the new place disheartened him. He would have come back home, but the Dogra authorities had literally made the peasants of Hajin landless by their policies of dispossessing Muslim farmers and peasants. Mere living was even something that would cost the life of a Kashmiri Muslim at that time. This environment of

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arson and agony, poverty and dispossession and above all displacement caused by the death of his father had turned Asad into a kind of cynic so much so that he became a Darwesh (Ascetic) in his very young age. Turning to *Darweshi* and spiritual life convinced him that if he could not get the pleasures of this world, at least he won't be wasting the opportunities for a successful life in the hereafter.

It is said that there lived a great *Sufi* by the name of Mahad Sahib in Noor Bagh who was the *Mureed* (disciple) of Sula Sahib Khandwaw.Mahad Sahib was connected with Rasool Sahib Waryach who was connected with Molvi Mohi ud in Khan Nihal Pori who was connected with Rahim Sahib Safapori. All the Sufis of this chain were generally *Majzoob* (one who has lost his senses but has a strong intuitional power). However, Mahad Sahib and his order followed the *Shariat* (Islamic Jurisprudence) and the *Qadri* order of *Sufism* even though Asad would visit Molvi Mohi ud Din Khan also apart from consulting Gafar Sahib of Dana Mazar and Rajab Sahib of Yungur village for spiritual guidance. Such an association helped Asad in attaining a broader spiritual vision in a shorter span of time as compared with his peers in the field; with the result, he had his followers in towns and villages equally.Some of his famous followers are named here:1.Razaq Mir of Noor Bagh who died young; 2.Shaban Wani of Salaw; 3.Siddiq Chan of Biyihama; 4.Siddiq Yatoo of Chandarhama who died young; 5.Mala Amar of Nihal Pora; 6.Gafoor Kral of Waniloo; 7.Aziz Mir of Andargam; 8.Ramzan Bhat of Ganastan, and an old man of Maraz who would visit Soulura upto 1975.

Of all these proteqees in spirituality, he loved Ramzan Bhat of Ganastan the most, who died in 1915 at the age of forty only. Shaban Wani served Asad for all his life and Asad married one of his daughters to him. Siddiq Chan lived the longest among all his students and he passed away in 1956. He was one of the tallest saints of his followers.

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It was during his internship as a saint that Asad started saying poetry. Ahmad Parray of Asham quotes his mother (who was the first cousin of Asad) saying that she herself had heard Asad saying that this was his first verse:

Dur Rozith kami barnai kan
Chum firaq ta lajis paman

Further, according to her, Asad lived in *Shahar* (Srinagar) those days when he said this verse. Whether this is his first verse or not, what is confirmed by this statement of his cousin is that he started singing his poetry in Srinagar only after his migration from Hajin. He had many loyal followers in Srinagar but his heart would pine for the village he had left. Ramzan Bhat arranged his shift to Ganastan and even constructed a separate house for him. His followers at Ganstan arranged for his marriage in Magam. He put up at Ganstan for six to seven years, and became a family man there. His followers would get him lots of gifts which he would share with his followers and peers as he would tailor skull caps all through his life for his livelihood. There would be a Music party (*Majlis e Sima*) every night. His closest friends included: 1.Aziz Mir and Samad Mir of Andargam; 2.Rasool Ganaie of Pochanag; 3.Sabir Wani of Hamray; 4.Peer Ghulam Ali of Soneum and 5.Siddiq Ganayi, a handsome young man from Rampor who died young and would dance while doing the Remembrance (Zikr) in his music parties, particularly when there would be a song of his composition, he would be found in a state of complete trance. The *Majlis e Sima* (Music Party) would be stopped at the time of prayers, and everybody would offer the prayer. Waking up for all the night and offering the special prayer of *Tahajud* (Midnight prayer) were constant practices in the circle. He would sleep for some time at the time of sun rise, and had memorized some chapters

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of the Holy Qur'an despite the fact that he was illiterate. He would even prescribe certain Qur'anic injunctions for spiritual practice to his followers /students. If invited by anybody over lunch or dinner, he would first ask him where and how he had managed all those things that would be offered for ascertaining whether it was *Halal* (Pure) or *Haram* (something from forbidden entities).Only when he would be fully assured that there was nothing *Haram* (forbidden) in the items offered, he would accept the invitation. He would be always accompanied by ten to fifteen of his followers/students. Asad would not eat much, and was fond of hot milk. He would smoke a lot, and his *Jijeer* (Kashmiri pipe for smoking) would not be touched by anybody.

All the friends and followers of Asad were rich. He would be at home in the houses of Ramzan Bhat and Aziz Mir, and would spend weeks together there. His *Mureed* (desciples) from Khui and other areas of Kashmir would reach there for seeking his blessings and prayers. Some special items used by Asad are still intact in the house of Aziz Mir like his *Kulah* (kind of skull cap, scepter made of wood, etc.) shown to this author by Gh Hasan Mir, who is the son of Aziz Mir, saying that even now some people from distant areas do come to see these objects, who or whose guides were under the spiritual guidance of Asad Parray. Ganastan had experienced the toughest times those days, that was why Asad was not happy about living there, although there were many people who respected him and loved him also.Gh Nabi Sheikh of Gandarbal (Zaildar) was one of his followers, who forced him to migrate to Saloora. He constructed a house for Asad at Aakhoonpora Mohalla and got Asad to live there. Asad did not think of Hajin at that time even though it is just eleven kilometers from Ganstan, nor did any of his children ever look for their roots in Hajin. His only uncle, Mukhta Parray, did not have children, a situation in which he would have given all the property of his grandfather (Kali Parray) to Asad Parray. In view of the distance main-

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tained by Asad from Hajin, nobody here knew anything about him. Had Asad not mentioned "Asad Parray of Hajin" in his poems, he could have been very easily projected as a poet from Saloora or Ganstan. After reaching Saloora, he continued his contact with his followers from Khui and Krohan while maintaining distance from the people of his native village. He had visited Palhalan in connection with an (*Urs*) and Andargam also in the last year of his life. He had had a stay of three days there, and then told his followers that his urine had impressions of blood in it and this might be the end of his life. Some weeks later ,his followers heard that Asad was no more in this world. When Aziz Mir, Qadir Mir of Andargam, Samad Mir and Rasool Ganayi of Pochnag reached Saloora for condolence , they came to know that Asad had passed away eight days before.

His poetry and his consciousness reached the level of perfection at Saloora. He would only occasionally visit the city where he would put up at the house of his daughter at Aalikadal. He lost the company of his wife and had five children from her: two daughters and three sons, Zaiba, Fatima, Ama, Maqbool and Fareed. Ama had died very young. Maqbool would sell eggs for earning his livelihood and Fareed died at Andargam without any children. His daughter Zaiba was married at Saloora and her children continue to live in the house of Asad Parray.

Many of Parray's followers have told me about his spiritual powers; however, I am not going to record them as Asad had been very much against boasting of such spiritual practices. He has used strong words against such people who misuse religion and religious practices like: Mantharigari ( ), *Ramzan Namazi* (those who offer prayers only in the month of Ramadan), fake spiritual healers, practitioners of magic and all those people who had brought bad name to spiritual practices. He was himself a strong and staunch follower of Islamic *Shariat*, however, would not issues dictates and decrees against anybody. Asad would never hurt anybody by his hand or by his tongue; however, if

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he would see anybody turning arrogant for his religiosity or misusing power against anybody, he would be angry with him. The people of Andargam still remember something related with this. It is said that when a Molvi from Srinagar came to Andargam, he literally canned Shaban Ganayi of Botaingo for not offering prayers as prescribed by the Quran and by the Prophet. When, after some days, Asad heard of the same, he strongly disapproved the act of the Molvi and declared it un-Islamic and said that this was not the Islamic way of preaching. He further said that "this heat of the attitude and temperament was all because of their concern for bellies and may Allah treat this disease of their bellies!" Just next day the people of Andargam heard that the Molvi fell ill at Naidkhai and was taken to Srinagar for treatment and died there. It is reported that Asad said this poem "*Timan suyi chali, Timan Suyi Chali*" on this day.

Asad Parray had good relations with his contemporary poet Wahab Khar. One day he had a debate/argument with Ahmad Batwari over the meaning of a poem. Batwari accepted his defeat before a huge gathering of people who had come to watch the debate. In some of his parties (*Majalis*), there would be a debate and discussion on the meanings of his own poems. The interpretation and meaning said by Parray would be accepted by the followers and students.

Asad had a strong faith associated with the shrines of different Sufi saints of Kasmmir. This is why he would attend the yearly celebrations on different shrines in Kashmir. He would speak less and disliked crossing boundaries in joking. Every follower would have his own share of guidance and everybody would leave the party (*Majlis*) on his own time for the work outside. He would have simple food and simple dress. He would have *Dastar* on his head very rarely. Generally, he would prefer his own handmade skull cap. In dress, he would have the traditional *Pheran* (gown) and trouser made of the stuff used in Chadars of Kashmir (Of Kashmiri wool may be those days).He had a

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moderate height, straight face, beautiful beard and had some impressions of chicken pox on his face. Even, when very angry, he would have smile on his face. He never thought about and cared for his economic helplessness or being without relatives. He would be lonely even when surrounded by people. His soul left for its heavenly abode in 1916. He was buried at Akhoonpora Gandarbal on the bank of a canal. We all are of Allah and we all shall return to Him.

Shahi trawith gadayi heni gachi
Faqras kun chayi nam tayi
Satan iqleeman hanz padshahi
Temai gachith chayi bakhastam

His Art

Poetry is an art which has its own principles and rules. Whether it be the rules of prosody, meter or the mastery on the art of use of right words at the right place, generally people associated with this field would have some teacher/guide in the initial phase. However, there has been a common pattern among most of the Kashmiri poets that they were without any teacher in the art of writing poetry. Asad Parray too falls in the same category. I did a lot of search for discovering his Poet teacher, but all the sources told me that he had had a Peer (Guide) in the field of spirituality and he had not consulted anybody for teaching him how to write or say poetry. The *Inner Centered* Kashmiri would very easily believe in this thing that after a man is initiated in spirituality, he/she does not require any teacher for some other field. This means that even though the poetry of Asad Parray might have been corrected by some teacher in the beginning, his followers wouldn't ever have remembered him for the same reason quoted above. However, the internal evidence from the text of his poetry confirms the fact that Asad had never had a teacher in poetry. What-

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ever scattered poetry of Asad has been located so far shows that it was the poetry of his initial years and that the technical weaknesses quite evident in many of his works might have crept in through illiterate singers over years. Asad Parray had not got his poetry into writing, nor had any of his followers/students done the same. That is the reason why many of his verses could not be located, and there is lack of coherence in the poetry available and even changes in language and imagination due to distortions of scores of singers who were the main sources of preservation. The memory of singers alone is not to blame, but Asad's poetry itself is responsible to a greater extent, reason being his linguistic constructions and expressions are not so easy sometimes to memorise. The Sufi terminology, Sufi way of thinking and classical references were not the cup of tea of illiterate singers and so errors and mistakes started coming in. Singers would make changes in words and expressions for their own ease till the originality of the text was almost endangered so much so that, while compiling his work, I once found a verse of Asad in three different versions from three different sources, with the result forcing an unpoetic man like me to become the forth source of the same verse. Should we call it change of words, modification or simply an addition to the existing text? Should it be called an effort aimed at tracing the original poetry of Asad with the help of some technical knowledge, or simply trying to play the teacher of Asad after his death? All these assumptions are true in their own places.

As Asad had no teacher in learning the art of poetry, similarly he seems poles apart from his peers in Sufi poetry in the use of Sufi terms and their treatment in his poetry. He has used them in a totally new way very much unlike other Sufi poets .Even though this is impossible that two poets could have the same style of writing and thought, yet there are similarities that could be easily located in the writings of the two. Asad is even unique when he talks about different signs of

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spirituality, junctures of spirituality and targets of spirituality. He has tried to make some unique experiments in the use of the same in his poetry.

After paging through all the text of his poetry, any critic would be convinced that even while internalizing the traditional Sufi views, recycling the words and expressions used by them, Asad maintains his individuality and comes up with a distinctive style, rather, some new experiments of *Tasawuf* come to the fore by his writing. However, every in partial critic has to agree to this fact that one sometimes misses the classical demands of art, e.g., use of proper meter is one such demand which is lost sight of by artists. Asad was an illiterate, man with the result, he could tolerate this weakness of misuse or abuse at many places in his poetry. For example:

1. Considering an improper word a proper word for the construction of meter as in:

Karakh chon sathi soda
Sarun gache chasma waugah
Barun gachi rath ta doh
Meli mazoori mehnatasayi

2. Use of rhyming word only instead of the rhythmic word, for example, some verses in the poem "*Dama Dama dil may neu kaban ta lolo*" (Prof. Hajini calls it a song in tune with the villager's use of the same word instead of a poem);

3. Use of one word in some verses of a song and then use of some other rhyming word in the same song in some other verses instead of having a particular meter, for example, see "*Boztam faryadaye Qadri khanwadayey*";

4. Use of a rhyming word that appears in the middle in place of meter, for example,

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Fana Fir rasool tathi manz chui basith
Zindagi Lasith zan
Darbar wuchhan sarkari aali
Sali nish sofiyas ta lolo

Even such weakness in the use of a correct meter could be found in most of our classical Sufi poets, yet the fact remains that singers have ravaged the metrical construction of Asad Parray's poetry, for example, his song "*Wuchu timan suyi chali* "could be taken as an example. It would be in place to mention that a fast friend of Asad Parray who spent most of his time with him and is one of the most important sources of his texts had even memorized the prose form of many of the verses that appear in this song. Such singers would at times just make changes in the place and position of a word appearing in a song and thus form a verse. If we just take the bad memory of the sources as a fact, then most of our classical Sufi poets have just neglected the metrical needs of a poem, which, however, was compensated by a singer by making modifications in terms of tone, intonation or lexical appropriacy. One of the reasons for this negligence could be that there is difference between a poet's saying something and that of a Sufi's way of saying something. According to Majnoon Gorakhpuri, a Sufi is completely lost in his own inner experiences, while as a poet in general is not at all lost in his own inner experiences and does not even value such inner experiences till he communicates them to others. However, when a Sufi experiences the stage of knowledge, he resorts to silence something quite contrary to a poet's attitude in the same condition. This is the reason they say something like this about the Consciousness of Sufis:

Na Bada hay na sarahi na Dore maikhana
Nuktai nigah say rangeen hay bazm e Janana

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Or

Maqam e Aql say aasan Guzar Gaya Iqbal
Maqam e Ishq may Khoya Gaya Yeh Farzana

In case of a Sufi poet like Asad being illiterate in the sense of the worldly knowledge, there is every possibility that his writings would have technical errors with the result creating the least literary effect among readers. Such writings are, on the one hand, extremely serious in nature, and, on the other hand, they are deficient in creating artistic ecstasy among the readers. That is why most of the Sufi poetry happens to be a Descriptive Poetry of Sufism like that of Asad Parray.

Sath Pay khasani chui az sarw payi
Sath Janath sath Jahanam tati drayi
Sath samandar tara sani chui siratas
Tami cho Ashqa wanuk mas

While sharing/expressing his inner experiences through poetry, a Sufi poet never intends that everybody must appreciate and experience the same as he has. Instead, common audiences do sometimes find appreciation of their poetry an uphill task as, for example,

(1) *Bihi bihi mazoor shahar log watnay*
Piyada kath Iman ani lolo
Oun gashdaras wath log hawnay
Gashdar log rawnay lolo

(2) *Ayeena andri karmas bayas*
Dila manzi meemas alifas salam
Meema nish gachithay alfa mochayas
Wuchi may sayas talk kam kam

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3) *Doun dilan manz nayri yus fairnay*
Chon seeran hanz khabar ani lolo
Zati sifati sorui tas wana
Satah sas parda chati mani lolo

Similarly, Asad Parray, like other Sufi poets, shares with us the different milestones of his spiritual journey with reference to different geographical locations:

(1) *Sani khota soun sadra khun*
Khowhuri kani wuchhan
Aasha naga kadla taar
Zanh sapdiya milchar

(2) *Bal chus nazan yawan rayas*
Heemal patal kun drayas
Nagabal samkhani nagi rayas
Wuchi me that sayas talk am kam
(3) *Bhawa naki rada tan naumasay*
Bhawa sara wuchum dewai jaan
Harmokh bala pana mansawmasay
Bawrasa rasay kornas tayar

In this poetry, words cease to carry their literal meanings and they are transported to some other realm. For example, let us take the case of words like *Saqi* (Cupbearer) and *Maikhana* (place for drinking wine). In such a scenario, *Maikhana* ceases to be a place where the *Saqi* distributes wine among drunkards, rather it sometimes refers to Gabraiel as in these verses:

Maikhanakis darwazas peth Jibreelas chi Jayi
Jibreelas chi jayi

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Doun manz temi mayi bagrawui temi tati rotnayi qarar
Ha Tati rotnayi qarar

And sometimes it refers to the spiritual guide (Peer) as in the following verses:

Awwal kar saqiyas zan
Sara sapdi panun pan
Yi saqi chuna sakh jaan
Chana walis aashaqasayi

And sometimes it refers to the extreme longing for truth in the heart of the traveler on the path of spirituality:

Aashiqaw may marifat prowaui
Al-Ishq billah parzanouwayi
Tami kali sour kour Asad Paryas
Ami chow ishqa wanuk mas

Nor does this type of poetry have any element of lustful content which critics bear with a heartful laughter. Wherever we find Asad having used expressions like *"Nazalye", "Latiye", "Soundarye", "Laliye"*, etc.(typical Kashmiri expressions which in poetry generally refer to a beautiful beloved), he nowhere uses them as metaphors for a beautiful damsel but he very clearly means by these expressions either the soul of the traveler, his own soul, collective consciousness of the traveler or the prophetic consciousness of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) as for example:

(1) *Heuk nazmeenan beyai aasmanan*
Dila nayi cholayi su baar
Sara kartayi soundaryi

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(2) *Ath maikhanas wacha khayi sranas*
Chaw rawuk marifatye latiyae

(3) *Waran najdas choun suyi heuth may sherun*
Wuchha shunyahaki aliyay latiyay

(4) *Malki wajooda andari chayi wahdatani feerith aayi*
Kourna sala lamaknas ami nazalye saz kour panas

This is why Asad has not experimented with the traditional Gazal. However, he gave a new soul to the poetic traditions of the ancients by embedding spiritual experiences to them. If ,on the one hand ,one can go on counting classical allusions like "Eighteen thousand worlds", "Seventy thousand curtains", "One Lakh and twenty four thousand Prophets", "Seven Witnesses", "Four Kilos", and "The Wealth and Shape of the World", which have been treated in the traditional manner;on the other hand, the same figures and classical expressions have been given a new poetic modernism by the poet at so many places thereby using poetry as a medium for expression of a dry subject like Tasawuf, for example,

(1) *Yami Lola kay darwaza chayi tima na feerith drayi*
Tora na feerith drayii
Pacha hanzi lari yach baran khach aayi sapnith beenadar
Sapanith beenadar

(2) *Dila kis kanzas dama kuyi dil tar*
Tuh tamah diyi kani beuban char
Dog dith karus branjbar

(3) *Gatarani gath diti sanyasas*
Gath karinay nari anfasas

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Pan zolun pata mastanas
Ami nazalyi saz kor panas

(4) *Nagma kor shahpari zeerobam wayas*
Yandraz takhtas bihith baygam
Sozach masti chi bayparwayas
Wuch may that sayas talk am kam

Some of his creative writings are the complete treatises of Sufi experiences, for example:

1. *Bat ay gos gark tawheed mas;*
2. *Partaw chi Sifat Zaat;*
3. *Waalaikum salam Faraz tour aawuha;*
4. *(Pad) Yati karum la ta ti chum Ilalah tahqeeq Gowum Moye Moye;*
5. *(Pad) Zahoor Adam chah pari taban aalam bari heutnam tayi.*

The study of these verses makes a reader realize the fact that Asad uses the minimum possible words to shroud the maximum possible spiritual experience of the traveler of the path and therewith also fills the empty and additional verses. Such a technique not only saves the time of readers but also makes the reader feel that the poet is adept in his/her field and knows the art of saying maximum with the help of minimum. Asad has said some *Wachun* songs on the pattern of *Shastar* as for example:

1. *Chus Chopari deshan tami sund gah*
2. *Borsa rasai kornas tayar*

In these songs, Asad has tried to mix *Vedanta* and *Trika* philosophy with Sufism, and thus continued with the legacy of Kashmiri Sufi poets. He says:

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Dusatat millat tan dith kuni ra
Sarinayi beun beun chi rehbar
Hajinaki asadi wuch yaksanai
Borsa rasai kornas tayar

This feeling that diversity of faiths and beliefs should not become a cause of conflict among the followers of these different faiths and beliefs makes every Sufi poet a sympathizer of mankind, and this very feeling compels a Sufi poet to emerge as the teacher of morality. Asad too has continued with the same legacy and used poetry as a medium for the teaching of ethics and morality to his followers:

1) *Yusna panunui pan sanbhalay*
Task us yeyi bozna jan
Dar hadith chi palan walay
Su darun tati chu ishkal
Bayi sund dosh yus tapa walay
Kham aashiq tas peu naw
Yusna lukahund naik bad chalay
Su darun tati chu ishkal

2) *Yina khochak zaman*
Su chu ibleesa sundai karo
Dalan chu Kaman Kaman
Chusya daman path mashoqo

3) *Chay khodi ta madi torkun noksan yorkun faqeer gachham tayi*
Namrood wa shadad beyi Phiraon kya khudi khawar karinam

It is on account of this moral consciousness of Asad that whenever he would see any fraudulent and self-centered man talking tall of the spiritual world, he would use the sharpest tongue against him:

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Hal qal parith chi maka wali
Wudi mas tasbeeh hachis snaili
Khoran kharw ath heth chota danbali
Timan sui chali teman sui chali
Saliki nish tim anda deethim
Jinan path manthar wali yema chim
Faqeeri nish khali wirda wali
Timan sui chali timan sui chali

Though some European critics and their Eastern followers do not like the style of preaching in poetry, yet this is a fact that this modern approach of criticism would suit to those minds only who support their artistic waywardness and satanic thoughts, lust, ambiguity and mental hedonism. The poor Asad was a man of traditional thinking, and he was the traveler on the path of Sufism and a firm believer of morality. Therefore, even when he turns to preaching, he only ends up saying something about his own soul though in an optative tone:

1) *Achakhai khalwakh dil sara kar*
Zahidai sathi heth gophi andar
Basti manz huni garas gar
Silsalai chaste chum rehbar
Dayim darshumar qayim roud
Tari tari manakui soza boz
Sui gazal khanan hund afsar
Silsalai chaste chum rehbar

2) *Hasti trawith neesti prawith*
Pan gal wath hayatsayi

The fact of the matter is that a Sufi in the world of intuition turns restless upon having the vision of something (Rumi calls it the world

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of Love), and finds peace and rest by continuously addressing his own self in these words:

Nur Zat gaw Allah Allah Nur Sifat Milanaw Nur Sifat Milanaw
Sifat Qadeem Zat e Qadeem Yaqeen aaw Rot mey Qarar ha
Rot mey Qarar

While expressing the deep anguish of his own soul, if the language of a mystic retains simplicity and balance he becomes a poet also, though he never intends that people should call him an artist. Contrary to this, he continues to announce that until someone does not learn to tread the path of his own inner world, the criticism till then continues to be a personal opinion which has scope of modification. However, if a critic also makes the same claim that even the imagination of a Sufi poet is also a personal experience and has all the relativity associated with it, which ceases to be an absolute unto itself, his/her claim would have this weakness that a Sufi is a *Sahib e Hal* man while as a poet is a *Sahib e Qal*(man of speech) man,something which makes them entirely different from each other. A Sufi poet talks of the conditions and situations of that world which a critic has never experienced. A critic evaluates the world of intuition with the help of his/her reason, and a Sufi poet appeals to him like Asad Parray saying that if you continue to evaluate art with the yardstick of your own reason, you would find yourself in utter loss till you do not step into the same spiritual experience. In the times of ignorance, you have every right to infer your own meanings from my issues of Love no matter you accept a Sufi's way of seeing the things or not:

Bozan manay Ishqa maslan
Mazhaba Khawaja yama aasan
Wun Asad Paryan sar chayi ghar
Silsala chaste chum rehbar.

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Sufi Thought in Asad's Poetry

Har kehn cha basith faqara kay zora sathi sari sayi aurkun nam tayi
Zun aftaba beya ardah sas aalam faqras tal thawi nam

Initially, Asad Parray was associated with the *Qadriya Silsala* of Sufi tradition, and latter on with the *Chisti Silsala* of Sufism. What were the spiritual benefits of this evolution or transition, it could be elaborated or explained only by those people who have lived both the traditions. We only intend to know how Asad Parray has evaluated different spiritual experiences and situations in his poetry, which I have been saying is the job of a *Sahib e Hal* critic, and I admit that "I am not a *Sahib e Hal* critic "with due regard to the fact that Asad himself calls Sahib e Qal people imperfect and immature (Most probably due to the fact that *Sahib e Qal* people borrow their ideas and imagination from books!), and even if he summons all his intellectual energy and potential, he would never equal the spiritual potential of a *Sahib e Hal* poet or critic. As, for example, Asad would talk about it:

Kham pathi kham manay charan
Pokta nokta garan
Won Asdi Temi Baba Paryan
Yar Az man Dar Tan

Here Asad addresses his critics in a veiled language saying that there are only a few people among them who have the knowledge of the facts like how the traveler of the Sufi path benefits in absentia from prophets and saints, thus gains an eternal life. He says:

Yami aasi aashiq zinda mounmutay
Sasaw andar su khasa akh

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Nabiyan ta waliyan nish dramutayi
Marith rutayi ho dapnayi

The critic who is caught in the world of manifest realities would find the Sufi a deviant when he tries to evaluate and measure the realities of hidden world and to the Sufi such a man of dry reason is actually a deviant.

Zahiras manz bag batin tithui
Yith doda manz chai thani neran
Baiqlan nash aaqil dolmutayi
Marith rutayi ho Dapnayi

Therefore, whatever observations would be made in this short analysis of Asad's poetry is an imaginary map of a common reader and not an absolute judgment or academic experiment of a scholar, particularly for the reason that Asad makes very tall claims regarding his spiritual experiences (though most of our Sufi poets do very rarely talk about themselves in a positive note. We are forced to admit that the practical life of Asad proves that he has not made such claims to just exaggerate the things but he must have passed through such spiritual paths as he puts it in the following verses:

1) *Watas nosh korum batas lol borum*
Nana nan howum na ikhtiyar kehn Asad Paryas sar

2) *Az maqam nasut gawsayi ta tati ba pheerith aas*
Zat wuch mya berang benishan tas heuh beyi kahn ma gar
Tas heuh beyi kahn ma gar

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3) *Lamakan gachitayi kya ba anzrawaw*
Zarzarat kayinat ha tati drawoha
Kor Asad Paryan tathi wartawo
Wa Alaikum Salam farz tora aawoha

While expressing these inner experiences and travelling from *Nasut* to *Lahut* every *Silsala* has many paths in it but one single destination.

Chodah khanwada timan nish drayi
Beun beun akh tareeq aayi
Kath chi kuni wata chyay beun beun
Aki sayi shahras gachan

Every aspirant of the Sufi path has had to look for a spiritual guide (Murshid) for the identification of the cherished path as the guide alone directs and channelizes his approach of thinking and beliefs in the straight direction. Asad too like other Sufi poets continues with the same legacy as he himself says:

1) *Dogniyara peeras hezini seeras*
Nama chanei rozan chatye latye

2) *Satat sas parda me chati peeran*
Me zaan karnam yeman seeran
Mey dardan oun pardan char
Sa bahar hai may ho matyay

However, according to Asad Parray, the discovery of a spiritual guide is an unseen blessing which is accorded to chosen ones only. That is why all of us are not inclined towards this path:

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1) *Azlai maqboolan iztirab zoranay*
Nayran peer chandanay lolo
Peer sund seer yus lalwi man manaye
Tas kuna Dilas sani lolo

2) *Torach ahi mani manz thawun*
Dil tami sathi chala nawun
Safa banithay wafa kartas
Gafa mo zan habas ta lolo

Outside this blessed category of Sufi saints is the category of those who are not worth the title. This category of people attribute to themselves the great deeds of the masters of the path when they themselves do not practice what they preach. Asad calls them animals:

Kalanaam bal hum aayaye furqan
Yi wanai amikui manaye
Aarifan aashqan hanzan kitaban
Amlan kani kani khewan

Next comes a man who does not trust the spiritual guide. Asad calls such people "worse than donkeys" even if they are scholars:

Tareeqata bekhabar badtar az gawkhar
Pormut anpar aasay
Thar karith farzas kun sa aasay
Darbadar atha hawan

After the discovery of the Spiritual guide, the traveler on the Sufi path has to cross many milestones, of which some special spiritual

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practices are to be internalized, for example, hidden remembrance (*zikr*) of Allah, *Zikr e Ikhfa* and *Zikr char kharab*, etc. and some special beliefs like obeying the guide, purity of deeds and complete abstinence from prohibited activities or some special practices like *Habs e Nafs* (Self Control) and living an isolated life. (Asad himself had undergone all such practices) Apart from all these manifest spiritual conditions, the mind of an aspirant is made to be a "participant in a hidden turmoil" and shown a world wherein the aspirant experiences a new birth of the soul or consciousness including his sensory organs particularly his sense of observation:

Mariftuk yami chow mas
Pheur tas nou hes
Aas walnayi kala shahmar
Zahn sapdiya deedar

In that very consciousness, our consciousness of time and space in this material world not only changes but also shrinks, as for example, Asad would have it :

1) *Ha Sataw Zameenaw Talai Khal*
Hu Nawaw Falkaw pethai wal
Haas ta Huas milwan kar
Silsalai Chasti chum rehbar

2) *Zahoori Insan Chapori Taban*
Aalam bari hetman tayi
Yi dar aalam ti dar aadam
Aarifan anzrawnam

3) *Tati rohan meini pour Qalu Bala*
Yati ti zan mai boz adi

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Antal Hadi
Dar azl hajinaki asadi wanimati gazal
Parna Salur Ustadi Antal Hadi

This is why the traveler on this path feels the alphabets of this world in a very different manner.

1) *Tay tati tchai ta seen sapdan*
Shahuk manay shahuk manay shayi zaan

2) *Sari sabaq chi paran walay*
Akh nokta both ati khal
Yusna ilme tawheed chi chalay
Su darun tati chu ishkal

Even our system of counting loses its essence there:

Zaf mal tami shayi rod sad sayi
Gaf as grand ta ganzrun wasith pew
Tami shayi su wechar wuchnaw nasayi
Bor sa rasai kornas tayar

With the result, the traveler on this path is blessed with a vision that people with the general eye sight can hardly afford to have as Asad explains in this couplet:

Sata ranga sath shahood deeda lagi phernay
Az wajood lagi neirnay lolo
Tas amal panni gath kari bronth kani
Yus andra safa bani lolo

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Similarly, the man blessed with this vision sights such colours which are nothing more than a name for the men of general eye sight as Asad further exposits:

Panch rang dardche zori parzilaw
Zard surkh ta siyahi praw
Gul safaid a sabz folanawtas
Tami chow ashqa wanuk mas

While undergoing the rightly guided training in the world of *Salook* (Sufi journey), the traveler gets to realize that this material world is a dark ocean wherein only the candle of heart could show the path, as he reflects on this subject in the following couplets:

1) *Zulmat chi ath mashali hati kuyi rath teela kani zaal*
Asad Paryo ashqa mashalay su darun tati chu Ishkal

2) *Tchai zulmats aabi hayatas*
Sathi heth ashqa mashalay laliyay

3) *Bani khay sikandar ach andar zulmat*
Gab ul gab pakan wath Tati ho hehui Doh rath

As this candle of heart brightens with the fire of love, the traveler on this path, on the one hand, gets nearer to the Truth, and, on the other hand, in the words of Data Ganj Bakhsh, he/she "condemns himself/herself to isolation from the masses" thereby discovering the secret of company in complete solitude". Asad explains this experience in these words:

1) *Wath dila manz dilas lagith*
Tot ba neunas zagith

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Kada nouwus khalwakh lolan
Yar az man tan

2) *Huni garach goph yus paly*
Kun zon wati matlabi hal
Had rous pan yasna mad walay
Su darun tati chu ishkal

In this very solitary state of being does the traveler come to such a state of consciousness where his/her thought and remembrance of Allah (Zikr) become altogether one:

1) *Fikre handi zora sathi zikre sazto*
Aqli sathi watakh darbar

2) *Karakh yud jahdi akbar*
Cha nafs sathi watakh darbar
Fikr thaw zikre sathani
Watakha kamalasay

3) *Sathi heth fikray chandan zikray*
Aaqil wahyi sohbatay latiyay

In this state of consciousness, the Sufi does not in the words of Shah e Jeelan think of anything but the Truth of all truths, and except the Light of Allah, he/she does not see anything else. Asad throws some light on this experience in these couplets:

1) *Asad Paryas yana gayi soklan*
Tal tami chalan rot nam tay
Dama dama bahazoor wuchnounas nor
Kya kalay sur kornam

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2) *Aashiqo may marifat prowoi*
Al Ishq bilahparznouwoui
Tami kali sur kur Asad Paryas
Tami cho ashqa wanuk mas

This very state of "*Kali handis sur gachnas*" is referred to as state of annihilation by some scholars on the subject. And if a traveler on this Sufi path strictly observes the rules of *Shariat* unlike a *Majzoob* (one who has utterly lost his/her senses), he/she like Asad Parray has to undergo many states and conditions before reaching the aforementioned state, of which one of the most important states is *Raza* (Highest degree of submission and certainty) where, on the one hand, the Sufi does neither ask for the heavens, nor seeks refuge from the hell; and, on the other hand, is highly certain about the fact that human soul rushes forth towards that sound only which it had heard before its birth in this world. Asad reflects on the subject in these words:

Awlayi khabra suz Rahim Raman
Majud manz sarnaman ta Lo
Kaba butkhana ratimati sawaban
Dada dil may neu kabas ta lo

And one understands that the *Kaba* that we turn towards during our prayers is *Qibla Numa* (Like the Qibla) as explained very beautifully by Mirza Galib:

Hay paray sarhad e idrak say apna masjood
Qibla ko ahl e nazr qibla numa kehtay hain

One achieves this vision when ones soul gets rid of all those blinds that hide it from the light of Truth. In Sufi terminology, this veil is

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the collective name of all those dirts of heart and mind which keep a man away from self-realisation and God-consciousness.

Andara nebrai maj nam may saban
Dama dama dil may neu kaban ta lolo

Having washed the dirt off his heart, the Sufi then bears the difficulties of the spiritual journey with all the pleasure and finds his food in the constant remembrance of Allah which is expressed through deeds pure like that of Shafiq Balkhi and Ibrahim bin Auhma with a firm belief in the oneness and powers of the Lord which is the moving spirit of the whole universe. Asad expresses this Sufi understanding of the spiritual world in these complies words:

Bulbulas Tholas Molas Tchawo
Ranga Ranga Zahoor Sifatas Bunyawoha
Ardhan sasan aalman chu bawo
Waalaikum asalam Farz tora aawoha

"Eighteen thousand worlds" first makes entry into conceptual framework of the Sufi's consciousness in the form of attributes which, in fact, forms the base of the poetry of a Sufi who follows the *Shariat* in letter and spirit; and on the strong foundation of this belief, his spirit later on gradually evolves to those heights which allow him the blessed vision of the Macrocosm of the spiritual world. Asad has this couplet to share in this regard:

Baqa billah Karith wahath
Sifatas manz zate pak
Noori sifats beyi noori zaatas
Yaksaan manz ahdas ta lolo

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This gradual spiritual development is at times rooted in the Islamic Sufi concept of *Fana fi Sheikh, Fana Fi Rasool, Fana Fillah and Baqa Billah* as Asad has to say:

Ti gou fana fi sheikh banana
Fana fi Rasool Deedar
Fana fi Rasool Deedar
Tchoul fana fillah yami Asad Paryo
Temi baqa wuchnai wechar
Temi baqa wuchnayi wechar

At times, it is determined and fixed on the neo-Platonic lines as in the following verses of Asad:

Gachak nasoota yud fan
Labak malkuta suye neeshan
Chu jabroot bas lahootas
Ba tanayi gous garqi tawheed mas

And, at times it reflects institutional progressive attitude in terms of: 1) Existential Pantheism; 2) Assertive Pantheism, and 3) phenomenal pantheism, as, for example, Asad explains in the following verses:

1) Ranga ranga cheez yus attaras nish anay
Aani attar su bani lolo
Bada farosha sultan su banay
Hajinuk asad parray su wani lolo

Deedan manz bag me paryaq su
Wihath karithayi zi katha chui
Suhan sup raga shah
Chus tchopari deshan tami sund gah

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2) *Wuchum yeli gab ul gabas*
Aaqb noqaan zawal notas
Manza chum karith milchar
Su bahar hay mai homotye

Nevertheless, the identification of all these different spiritual stations and signposts is not carried out in a chronological and gradual manner as we generally do in terms of First, Second, and Third, etc.; the classification of these stations is rather shown in a randomized order, the reason being the higher the consciousness of the Sufi traveler soars, the lesser becomes his tolerance of the upper stations of spiritual development. However, it is a fact that the real beginning of these spiritual stations starts from the World of Attributes itself, that is why every lover (whether the lover of Truth or the lover of the ordinary things of this world) in the initial phase of his/her love, remains a pantheist in the search of the world that is beyond our sensory experience. Asad says:

Andar neerith nebar neunas majazan tay
Asad Paryo roye Nabi wuchantay

In the love focused on this-worldly things, when a lover passes through with a heart pure and clean, his/her heart after having immersed in the statement *La Ila ha Illallah* (there is no god but Allah) becomes the recipient of the glow and grace of the eternal beauty of Truth (subject to the condition that he/she does not suffer from the fall that Sheikh Sanaa experienced), and then such verses are naturally expressed:

Mil tul anas wara parzanawo
Fana fi sheikh rasool andyawoha

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Gachi fana fillah baqa parzanawo
Waalaikum salam farz tora aawoha

Thus, having experienced or just assumed these spiritual stations, the traveler on the path of Truth finds his/her existence centered on the Muslim statement La Ila ha Illalah, who finally says the Greatest Name (Allah) with this view:

Manzlaw maqamo neerith ta pheerith
Khabra yami ani nam tayi
Pan panun sheirith Ism e Azam
Wirda temi rotnam
Akui harfa yamis saneuwo
Sarei ilmuk wuchnas bawoha
Warisatul anbya awliya baniyowo
Wa alaikum salam farz tor aawoha

The history of *Tasawuf* bears witness to the fact that this very *Kalima* (La ilaha Illalah) makes every *Salik* (the traveler on the Sufi path) the follower of the *Shariat* of the Rasool (prophet); and by virtue of this following, he/she dyes his/her own character with the divine colour (the colour of Allah and who would claim superiority in comparison with Allah's colour) thereby experiencing a gradual development and upliftment on the ladder of spirituality as if he/she were discovering a new life after death after death. Asad enlightens us about this experience in these verses:

Sharaf ul makan anzrowmutai
Nabiyan sathi bilmakeen zaan

La ta Illalah gachi mana parnui
Ada zanakha zinda marnui

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Poz zeu hund gachi manzil bay
Go yaras yar wasil bay

Ruhas china su panani zindagi
Yur dis hayati lag rindagi
Aashiqas marnuk chuna kahn dar
Silsalai chaste chum rehbar
La naïf sarisai fani draw
Illalah isbat wasool aaw
La ta Illalah kul daftar
Silsala chaste chum rehbar

A similar kind of discourse on the subject could be found in the following couplet of Maulana Jalal ud Din Rumi:

Guft siray zindagi az mardan ast
Shama ra sad jalwa az afsudan ast

This constant and continuous spiritual exercise has its beginning in the play of *Nafi* (Negation) and *Isbat* (Assertion) which many of our masters have discoursed on in detail. For example, the *Kalima* (Logos) *La ila ha Illalah* (There is no god but Allah) must have struck the heart and mind of a man in such a manner that upon the strike of *Illalah* on the soul of the Sufi traveler he must have asserted the fact that Nobody deserves to be worshipped but Allah, Nothing else exists except Allah and Nobody is the destination of all spiritual efforts of human beings but Allah with a clear understanding and vision of all these statements. I admit my incompetence of attempting a discourse on such delicate spiritual concepts, nor does the scope of this paper allow space for the same. However, everybody is well aware of this fact that *Nafi-Isbat* (Negation-Assertion) belongs to the initial stage

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of spiritual training and a sufi traveler goes on exploring many more stations thereafter. In this spiritual world, even our breath has a different meaning. However, most of the researchers on the subject agree that this spiritual training of the initial stage helps the Sufi traveler in the understanding and comprehension of *Tawheed e Sifati and tawheed e Zati (Tawheed e Zati* refers to an understanding of the Self and the Universe in such a way that man himself is considered the real doer of all the things; whileas, *Tawheed e Sifati* refers to understanding of all the qualities of God's creations in terms of the qualities of the God Himself). Men of knowledge are of the opinion that this particular spiritual training propels the Sufi traveler from *Tawheed e Wajoodi* to *Tawheed e Shahoodi* (the meditation of *Tawheed e Wajoodi* is carried out with the help of heart, while as meditation of *Tawheed e Shahoodi* is carried out with soul). Asad Parray has given a detailed account of this particular spiritual condition the delicacies of which could be further explained by the Sufi travelers only:

Dama dam yus akha nalay
Har nafas suyi galay pan
Boz tami kuy yus bana tchalay
Su darun tati chu ishkal

An wasool dam bani nay shah partaw
Kar salay samandar
Khaltan dur tati lali jawhar to
Partaw chi sifat e zat

Shod boz shah soz kath chi dapan
Shahuk many shahayi zaan

After enlightening the spirit with *Tawheed e Zati* and *Tawheed e Wajoodi* by the constant practice of *Nafi-Isbat*, there are three more

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spiritual exercises in the *Qadri school* of spiritual thought: 1) Action based meditation (*Muraqaba e Ifaali*); 2) *Muraqaba e Kul Man Alaiha Fan*; 3) *Muraqba e Allahu Noor us Samawat*. Asad Parray has even pointed to these spiritual exercises at different places in his poetry:

Nafs Pannui tahqeeq yus gayi tami khuda parzunownam tay
Man arafa nafsahu faqad arafa rabbahu kya hadith polnam
muraqba kul man alaiha fan

Fan hay sabzuk zan hay sapzi
Man chon rodnay patiye latiye
Manz malkan yusna pan galay
Khalqan manz kari suyi kar

Dah wardah daman gah tronam nur e anwaro
Zanh no beuthus taman, chusyu daman path mashoqo

Shah chi akh lach chuwuh sas
Gah gachi thawun tehudui pas gati manz
Shah aawno ratrawan
Shahuk mãny shahai zan

The gradual development of the human spirit in all these spiritual exercises is possible only when it would first of all overcome all the temptations of the *nafs e ammara* (base self); then, it would pass through successfully the attacks of the *nafs e lawamma*, thereafter, instead of stooping to the lowest of the low, it rather would soars to the heights of spirituality in order to completely defeat the Satan, which, of course, results in the enlightenment of the human soul and is then said to have achieved the *nafs e mutmainna*. This is, of course,

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a very difficult journey which the spirit of the Sufi traveler has to undergo. Some scholars refer to this constant journey and evolution of spiritual progress as the "*Bar Amanat*" (Difficult Most Trust) which nobody else but human beings accepted to shoulder.

Bar e amanat arshas ta kursi dapenam tultam tay
Tem nasa wari aayi khodayi pakas aadman bari heutum

Heukna zameenan beyi aasmanan dila nayi tcholui su bar
Sir katayi sundari

Scholars call this potential of human beings to shoulder the most difficult responsibility "*Shariee takleef*" (Shariee Responsibility), and also refer to it as the means of self-realisation and self-recognition, as Asad would have it:

Asqakis gars saras ta payas
Yur heni lamakanas drayi
Salikan sathi malik banyayas
Wuchi me that sayas talk am kam

However, the attainment of this spiritual status could be possible for a man only when he/she has already enlightened his soul with the light of *nafs e mutmaina*. Consequent upon attaining the heights of this state, the Sufi traveler may either go deaf, or would express his feelings and knowledge through a symbolic language.

Sultani Sikandar log yeli neyayas
Zulmat akbar lalan tchaw
Wunt heni aab e hayats gayas
Wuch me that says talk kam kam

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Jogiya lagith duni zaj masayi
Khalwakh dandukh wansayi manz
Paranayi abas sharer zolmasayi
Ba zasayi sai kornas tayar

Ilach pholya kulis hochai
Chi chawan bulbula kya nay
Wuchun meelith gul ta khar
Su bahar hay may homuyey

In such a spiritual state, if the Sufi talks in our own language, the normal human reason fails to comprehend it, as, for example:

Min Hablil wareed nakh aamutui
Banbre alan Kama kan
Deedan jan e jahan aamutay
Marith rutui ho dapnay

Don dilan manz neeri yus ferinay
Tchun seran hanz khabar ani lolo
Zati sifati sorai tas wani
Sath sas parda chati mani lolo

This is why instead of reason one has to depend on faith in such matters, simply because faith has such a power that those who know and those who are ignorant, and the Sufi traveler and a man of knowledge are equally caught in its web. The Sufi traveler experiments with the things in the world that are hidden from our eyes and says:

Yami lolakay darwaza drayi tima na feerith drayi
Torna feerith drayi

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Pachi hanzi lari yatch baran khachayi sapnith beenadar
Sapnith beenadar

And then the man of knowledge starts his faith from the *Iman e Mujmal* .When this faith exposes the consciousness of the Sufi traveler to an altogether new world, he, consequent upon comparison of this world with the New World, finds it the "Biggest World" (Alam e Akbar), and feels with all certainty that some invisible power has caused commotion to his spirit, which, of course, the common senses of man cannot analyse and dissect and which is beyond our reason. However, those who happen to know the secrets of the *Alam e Malakoot*, have this to say with all humility:

Alam e Malakoots andar tchayas
Dar sajood chi zate e sifat
Yoruk sajda karto robup khodayas
Wuchi me that sayas talk am kam
Gumana go Gibreelas beywayas
Hoolas manzi par chata wani draw
Gaib ul gaib manz thaki thai piyayas
Wuchi me that sayas talk am kam

With reference to the same *Alam e Malakoot*, Asad wants to draw our attention to in this couplet:

Ism e azam bawith thownam salikas salookchi shayi
Sifato kani zatas watakh ahadyat parkhaw

We could afford asking two questions only at the most with refrence to manifest identification of different spiritual stations: one, of the hundreds years of human life, what are those characteristics which

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a Sufi traveler has to necessarily prove by virtue of his/her actions and deeds; and, second, what does *Ahadyat* stand for?

In the classical Sufism ,seven different attributes/characteristics are attributed to seven prophets. They are: 1) generosity of Prophet Abraham; 2) Raza e Ismaieel or submission of Ismaiel; 3) Patience of Ayub; 4) Ishar e Zakariya; 5) Strangeness of Yahya or Isolation of Yahya; 6) Wanderings of Jesus; 7) Faqr of Mohammad. However, Asad Parray has nowhere tried to categorise these characristic features of prophets with reference to their names though these attributes/characteristic features have been mentioned at stray places here and there in his poetry. It could be assessed from his poetry that Asad has discovered all these characteristics/attributes from the *Faqr e Mohammad* which, of course, gives birth to all great and beautiful qualities in a man. Asad says:

Az mulk e wajood chus ba mehmood wuchantay
Satan shayan ism e Mohammad parantay

Suyi chui shahi faqrach aahi torai yas karnam tay
Faqruk taj chui rasool e akram sari sai rak kornam

The reason is quite simple. The Sufi traveler has, consequent upon undergoing the process of understanding and living through the secrets of the *Kalima e Tawheed*, experienced what Asad says in the following couplet:

Fana fi rasool tathi manz chi basith zindagi lasith zan
Darbar wuchhan sarkar aali, Sali Nish faqeeras ta lolo

Consequent upon such experiences in the spiritual life of a Sufi, he/she directly drinks at the spring of *Wilayat* and is blessed with all that Prophet Muhammad (SAW) urges his followers to get blessed

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with, of which His companions were the first and the most competent heirs. Asad Parray insists in his poetry that this spiritual heritage reached to the Ummah, latently as well as manifestly, through the four friends of the Prophet:

Siddiq poz ta adl e Ummar
Hayaay Usman Jihad e Haidar
Tihanz yartch chai muhkam tas
Bat ay gos garq e tawheed mas

And he further elaborates the same in this couplet:

Shayou tawfo kami kar zan
Uwais Hilal Bilal salman
Babatin kalmia porui tas
Batay gous garqay tawheedas

His poetry also points to the fact that every companion of the Prophet was in one way or the other an extraordinary sample of some spiritual character:

Shariat zew chal khak sapnan
Ainun yaqeen prawnanwan
Siddiq tathi manz thawan

Tareeqat ainis tuli zangari
Wuch haqq ul Yaqeen warai
Ummar tari tarai

Haqeeqat aaba kew shamao deedar
Ainu l Yaqeen wuch samsar
Tor kun lar hayadar

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Marifat chawith nar ho marawat
Haqq ul haqq qadam thawith
Beuth jihad wartawith

Mashaiyakh wartawa chonaway yar aay
Siddiq sab jabrutiyay
Hazrat ummar saban adal wartowiyay
Nasoota pan thowuyay
Hayadar Hazrat Usman Gani
Lahoot Jai ratanayay
Hazrat Ali Saban Jihad Wartowayay
Malakoot tami basaouyay

In other words, this categorization could be illustrated through this table:

1. *Abu Bakr Siddiq =Shariat=Ilm ul Yaqeen=Khak=Jabroot e Sidq*
2. *Ummar Faroq=Tareeqat=Haq ul Yaqeen=Badd=Nasoot e Adal*
3. *Usman Gani=Haqeeqat=Ainu ul Yaqeen=Aab=Lahoot e Haya*
4. *Ali Murtaza=Marifat=Haq ul Haqq=Naar=Malakoot e Jihad*

It is quite possible that there might be some changes in point nos 3, 4 and 5 due to the narrations of the people; however, what makes Asad quite distinct from other Sufi poets is the fact that so far generally, leaving Naqashbandi tradition of Sufism aside, the other thirteen traditions trace their beginning with Hazrat Shah Wilayat; and Naqashbandi tradition with Abu Bakr Siddiq (RA). Asad Parray uses the eclectic approach, thereby finding in all the four great companions of the Prophet (PBUH) the continuation of the spiritual thread of trust passed on to them by the Prophet (SAW), thus making *Siddq*, *Adl*, *Haya* and *Jihad* fundamentals of the spiritual world. The Qadiriya tradition of Sufism could be responsible for such an eclectic approach of Asad, which he held dear throughout his life:

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Wati asi hawnayi hazrat e nabyan sheir gos e pakin jay
Zahir ta batin deen zinda kornam peuas Mohi ud Din naw

In this very tradition, it could be found that even Hazrat e Gos e Pak is quite eclectic when he counts the four companions of the Prophet as the prototypes of the spiritual character that is necessary for a Sufi of Qadriya tradition. He is of the opinion that the Sufi should have developed twelve characteristics from twelve springs of spirituality:

From Allah --------Mercifulness and forgiveness
From the Prophet of Allah---------Kindness
From Siddiq-------Straightforwardness and truthfulness
From Ummar-------Differentiation between Right and Wrong
From Utman------Feeding the poor and wakeful nights
From Ali-------Scholarship and bravery

We may have to agree to this fact that even though Asad has not mentioned these twelve characteristics at one place in his poetry; his spiritual guide might have for sure told him about the same. While practicing the same, therefore, he might have said these verses:

Wasidan meanen ath daftar to
Awlach ta akhrach khabar
Sar kar chus ma zerwa zabar to
Partaw e sifate zat

And found the station of Ahadiyat:

Wuchan gach tchayay chay ma ahadas
Buthay dayira wilayat tas

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Sifat zatas nishay beun tchar
Su bahar hay may homutyay

Abdul Karim al Jubali (RA) has very rightly commented on the station of *Ahadyat* that when we believe in Allah in absolute terms, it could be reflected (this belief) from our consciousness through three universal concepts:1) *Ahadyat*; 2) *Gairiyat*; 3) *Zatiyat*. When in the station of *Ahadyat*, all its Associates and Attributes are lost; in fact, the circle of *Wilayat* gets limited to this area only.*Gairyat* is related to the circle of prophethood where no general consciousness could think of having an access to.The last point for this stage is *Me'raj* (The Ascent) which except Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) no other prophet could have.As for as *Gairiyat* is concerned, it is absolutism which we have to have a strong belief in, and which is in the times of *Gairiyat* is reflected through *Nabouat* (Prophethood); and in the stage of *Ahadiyat* through *Wilayat*. The Sufi who has had the experience and understanding of *Ahadiyat* becomes, in the words of Ali Hujweri (RA) postbearer of the hidden spiritual world. These post bearers are found in the world in every age. The world of manifestions runs under their spiritual guidance. They are: Three hundered *Akhyar*; forty *Abdal*; Seven *Abrar*; Four *Awtar*; Three *Nuqaba*, and One *Qutb*. In the life long journey of a Sufi, if somebody could not achieve those spiritual heights which make one the post bearer or rank holder from the above mentioned, he/she still continues his faith in the same and muses like Asad in these words:

Wasidan meanen ath daftar to
Awlach ta aakhrach khabar
Sar kar chus ma zer o zabr to
Partaw chi sifat zaat

Lastly, there remain two questions which this paper does not want to answer: first, in today's materialist world, is there any scope

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for acknowledging and accepting the presence of the Spiritual World?; second, if this spiritual world does exist, was then Asad Parray trying to experience the *Ahadyat* stage of spirituality? Looking for answers to these questions from the poetry of Asad Parray is not difficult. Critics have a vast field for analyzing texts for various purposes. They can altogether reject the propositions that I have made in this paper ,or simply correct them. However, I could still go on saying that despite being an unlettered man, Asad went on following the teachings of *Qadriya* and *Chastiya* traditions of Islamic Sufism, and has, in fact, identified many such spiritual positions and conditions in his poetry which to every believer throw inklings like this couplet in Persian language:

Khuda andar qayasi mangunjad
Shanas aan ra ki goyad aa arfnak

Thus, making the practitioners of Sufism feel and recognize that:

Aql Gayab wa justaju
Ishq hazoor wa Iztirab

Note: Professor Mohi ud Din Hajini wrote this paper as a foreword to *Kuliyat Asad* which he himself compiled and got published through Academy of Art, Culture and languages, Jammu and Kashmir in 1976. I have tried to transliterate the paper into English with the intention that scholars reading and writing in English may have access to some of the original research works available in Kashmiri language. Most of the Sufi terms, which are culture-specific, have been kept as they are as alternatives in English might not convey the sense properly and may even create confusion. Nevertheless, despite all my efforts to be communicative in this translation, there might be

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still many gaps which the readers' feed back can for sure fill. I would expect that readers would convey to me their criticism so that in future any mistakes/errors in such works could be avoided).

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Kashmir

Glimpses of History, Culture and Literary Traditions

About the book

This book is a collection of papers written by late Prof. Mohi ud Din Hajini on different aspects of Kashmiri literature, culture and history. Of the six papers presented in the collection ,the first three had been written by the late Professor in English himself and the last three in Kashmiri (translated by the compiler, Ameen Fayaz, into English).The papers published in this book would be helpful for research scholars, teachers and students of Kashmiri literary heritage and its genesis / evolution. The book could prove a small reservoir of intellectual reflections on our glorious past and would also be an inspiration for those who are contributing to our culture and literary thought.

About the author

Professor Mohi ud Din Hajini (1917-1993) was a great academic, researcher of Kashmiri language and literature. An organizer and institution maker par-excellence, he worked tirelessly for an intellectual movement in Kashmiri language and literature. The present compilation of some of his writings is directed towards introducing the late Professor to English reading section of scholars working on Kashmiri language, literature and culture.

About Editor / Translator

Ameen Fayaz teaches English language and literature at the Department of English, North Campus, University of Kashmir. He has edited Discourses of Prof. Hajini, a collection of his English papers on different themes. In the present compilation, he has translated three of late Hajini's papers from Kashmiri to English.